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IN THE TWILIGHT.

BY "CHRISTOPHER NORTH."

This is the hour when memory wakes
Visions of joy that could not last:
This is the hour when fancy takes
A survey of the past!

She brings before the pensive mind
The hallowed scenes of earlier years:
And friends who long have been consign'd
To silence and to tears!

Friendships that now in death are hush'd
And young affection's broken chain:
And hopes that fair too quickly crush'd
In memory live again!

This is the hour when fancy wreathes
Her spells round joys that could not last;
This is the hour when memory breathes
A sigh to pleasures past.

THE WAR OF THE ROSES

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HIS WEDDED WIFE," "BARBARA GRAHAM," "PENKIVAL," "WE KISSED AGAIN," "BUNCHIE," ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LITTLE SEED.

ONCE again that evening the White Lancer and Lady Castlemaine met. She had gone into the pretty conservatory, of which Lady Morgan was so proud, and stood looking at some white hyacinths, famous for their rare fragrance; several people had been admiring them, Colonel Lennox last of the group.

"I never care to look at white hyacinths," he said to Lady Castlemaine; "They remind me of one of the most pitiful sights I ever saw in my life."

"What was it?" she asked.

"It is hardly a story to tell while 'Sweethearts' is being played," he answered.

"I should like to hear it," she said, very gently.

"Your wish must be law to me!" he cried—"the sweet law!"

She looked up at him in haughty surprise: he was quick enough to perceive his error.

"I beg your pardon, Lady Castlemaine," he said; "I did not think what I was saying. We soldiers have such a blunt, brusque way of speaking. Pray forgive me. It is the fashion in camp just to say what we think; you have no idea, if we think anything sweet, or the reverse, how difficult we find it to refrain from saying it. Am I forgiven?"

"Perfectly," she replied, with a gracious bend of her golden head. "Now tell me the story, and why the white hyacinths are painful to you."

"I should hardly call it a story," he said. "It is rather an incident which happened at Isandula. I must not mention the name of my comrade, but I will call him Gerald, a fair-faced, handsome, honest lad, whom everyone loved. We fought side by side at Isandula. Twice I rescued him from those ——forgive me—from the Zulus. The third time he was attacked he fell, pierced through the heart by an assegai. I raised him, and at some risk afterwards brought his dead body from the field. When we undressed him, to see if by any chance he might still be living, we found in his breast a packet of white hyacinths; of course they were faded and dead. The assegai had pierced them, and they were wet with his heart's blood; but on the paper was written, in his own handwriting—

"'If I fall in battle send these to *her*.' The name and address were written beneath."

"Did you send them?" she asked, in a low voice.

"Yes; and I have met the lady since. She is one of the ornaments of London society. I always see her bright, laughing, and gay, yet I know that the greatest earthly treasure she possesses—the prize she values most on earth—is the faded bunch of flowers that were wet with her lover's heart blood."

He saw tears dim the lovely blue eyes, so tender and so true.

"Did she marry?" she asked.

"No; how could she, Lady Castlemaine, after a romance like that?"

"How much you have seen!" she said slowly.

"Much that I should like to forget," he cried; and there flashed across his mind the vision of a dead woman's face—a woman whom friend and foe alike said he had driven to death.

"It is a grand life that of a soldier," said Lady Castlemaine; "and you must have been born for it. You were made to be a soldier. You could not have been anything else. You are so strong and so fearless."

"I love my profession," he said.

"And you have made a great name in it," she replied.

He bowed low.

"Forgive me," he said, "if I presume to say that is the sweetest praise I have ever heard."

"The Queen gave you the Victoria Cross herself, did she not?" asked Lady Castlemaine.

"Yes, and that was the proudest moment of my life—except one."

"What was that one?" she asked.

"I must not tell you yet," he answered.

"I shall always think of the lover and his lady when I see white hyacinths for the future," she said. "Have you ever been afraid in battle, Colonel Lennox?"

"I think," he replied, "that the bravest must feel something that is more like awe than fear. It is difficult to realize that one minute you are strong and well, and that the next you may be biting the dust—pierced to the heart by sword or bayonet, or blown into atoms by a shell or ball. It makes a man thoughtful?"

"I should think that a soldier must always keep himself ready to die!" she then said.

"I am afraid very few of us look at it in that light," he answered.

Some of his wildest escapades had taken place when death stared him in the face. He then continued—

"One feels neither fear, awe, nor dread when the rush of battle begins; then it is fire not blood that runs in a man's veins; the very air seems red; there is a great deal of the tiger in men having once tasted blood——"

He stopped abruptly.

"Forgive me again," he said; "I am very unfortunate this evening. I have shocked you."

"No," she replied, "you have only made me think."

She smiled as she continued.

"I cannot imagine anything of the tiger in you, but then brave men are always gentle."

It was almost a shock when Isabel Hyde's voice sounded near to them.

"I could not find you, Gertrude," she said, "and Lord Castlemaine is looking for you."

She did not seem in the least degree hurried; her beautiful face was quite calm and unconcerned.

"I have been here some time," she said. "Colonel Lennox's stories fascinate me."

"I thought they would," said Isabel.

Ah, Heaven! was it coming at last—at last? Did she hold the threads of the web in her own fingers?

At last! At last!

He was looking at her with passionate adoring eyes, and she was serene and gracious.

"Does Lord Castlemaine wish to go home?" asked the beautiful white rose; "if so I am quite ready."

"She had no regret at leaving me!" thought the colonel.

"She will not leave him so easily in a few weeks' time!" thought Isabel Hyde.

And Lady Castlemaine, in all the pride and serenity of her loveliness, swept from the conservatory.

"At last! At last!" said Isabel Hyde to herself; and one watching her might have thought she was praying, her lips moved so earnestly, and her face was so bright.

Shortly afterwards she followed Lady Castlemaine to her dressing-room.

"May I come in?" she asked; and Lady Castlemaine hastened to answer—

"Yes, I was longing for you! You can go, Janet," said the young countess to her maid.

There could be no prettier picture than the interior of that dressing-room, with its hundred treasures of art, its luxurious disarray; the toilet table with its flounces of Mechlin lace, its wealth of silver-topped bottles, ornaments, and dainty vases of Venetian glass.

Articles of luxury lay on all sides; the sheen of silk; the lustre of velvet; the glimmer of satin; the light of costly jewels; all made a splendid picture of magnificent disarray.

Lady Castlemaine, in a dressing gown of pale blue silk embroidered in white flowers her long golden hair lying like a veil over her shoulders, was one of the loveliest pictures; the ruddy glow of the firelight fell full upon her and deepened the delicious tints of her face, her eyes, the hair, and her dress.

She pointed to a chair.

"Sit down Isabel," she said; "I was longing to see you. I have come to the conclusion that the greatest luxury on earth is to have one's hair well brushed after a long night's dancing."

"Brushing your hair is no light task, it is so abundant," said Isabel, passing her hand caressingly over the shining waves.

Caressingly, but the thought was that some day that dainty, queenly head would be humbled to the dust.

"I shall not mind if I fall with her," she thought, "provided only that she falls"; and there was ever before her, both by day and by night, a picture of a queenly white rose fallen into the dust and the mire,—withered, faded, and dead.

None of these thoughts were written in her face; that was smiling and bright enough as she said,—

"It was not about the luxury of hair-dressing that you wanted to see me, Gertrude?"

"Indeed, it was not," laughed Lady Castlemaine. "I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed my conversation with the great hero. Do you know, Isabel, he seems quite different to other men."

"He is different," said Miss Hyde, with a peculiar smile. "Do you really like him?"

"I do, very much indeed; he interests me greatly. Is he married, Isabel?"

"No," replied Miss Hyde. "Such men as Colonel Lennox never marry."

"But, surely he loves someone? I cannot imagine a brave knight without a faire ladye."

"There is none in his case," said Miss Hyde, "or I should have heard it. If Colonel Lennox were to devote himself to any woman, that woman would be for the time queen of all fashionable London."

"Why do you not enter the lists, Isabel?" asked Lady Castlemaine; she held the waves of her hair in her hands, and was watching the golden hue. "You would win, I am sure."

"I might do," said Isabel, carelessly; "but, although I have a great admiration for Colonel Lennox, he is not the kind of man I should fall in love with, or marry."

"Perhaps not," said Lady Castlemaine, thoughtfully, "but he is a great hero, Isabel. Did you see how the fire flashes from his eyes? I should like for once to see him in a rage. He would be something magnificent."

"Something terrible," interrupted Isabel. "I should not like it. But, Gertrude, you really would like to see him sometimes and talk to him?"

"Yes," answered Lady Castlemaine; "I really should."

"Then will you take a little advice from me, Gertrude? You will never regret it. You would like to be on friendly terms with Colonel Lennox, to ask him to your balls and parties."

"I should," replied Lady Castlemaine.

"And you will be able to do so. He may even become the same cat of the house, if you will follow my advice, Gertrude."

"Let me hear it first," said Lady Castlemaine.

"Say nothing about him just at first to Lord Castlemaine."

"But why not?" asked Lady Castlemaine. "Why not Isabel?"

"I will tell you," she replied. She drew the shining waves of golden hair through her own hands, and there was a strange smile round her lips as she answered. "I will tell you, for with all your quickness and cleverness you do not understand the world so well as I do. I will tell you, Gertrude. Although Colonel Lennox is the hero of the day, the great man of the hour—although he is one of the finest of Her Majesty's officers, there are just a few people with whom he is not popular."

"They are jealous of him!" said Lady Castlemaine.

"It may be that," was the diplomatic reply. "Colonel Lennox holds strong political opinions of his own. He urged a certain line of conduct during the Zulu war, which made him enemies."

"That is not just," cried Lady Castlemaine.

"It is not just; but few things are in this strangely managed world," said Isabel; and she bit her lips as she thought of a certain injustice done to her. "Men form strong opinions on such matters," she continued, "and they are often bitterly prejudiced against each other."

Not one word of the red stain on his character which would have made Lady Castlemaine dislike him; not one whisper of that moral turpitude which would have made him distasteful to her. She did not even hint at the reasons why those who disapproved of his views passed on the other side of the road and held out no hand to him.

If Lady Castlemaine had heard even one of those terrible stories against him, she would have declined to meet him, and would have known that her hero-worship was wasted; but the impression so cleverly conveyed to her was that Colonel Lennox was eccentric or peculiar in his line of politics, and so drew upon himself the dislike of those who did not think as he did. The whole world must admire him as a brave soldier—a man of magnificent courage; but all men did not of necessity admire his politics.

"But, Isabel," she said, "Rudolph, although he takes great interest in politics, would never be so unfair as to dislike such a man as Colonel Lennox on account of his opinions, let them be what they may."

"I do not say that he dislikes him; that is going too far. I merely say that I have

noticed in Lord Castlemaine a shadow of dislike to him—a faint shadow."

"I have never even heard him mention his name," cried Lady Castlemaine.

"Nor have I," said Isabel. "It was by his perfect silence when the colonel's name was mentioned, and the expressive shrug of his shoulders, that I knew Lord Castlemaine did not like him."

"You are quick and have a sure instinct, I know," said Lady Castlemaine. "But even if it be so why should I care? I do not like all Rudolph's friends, nor do I expect him to like all mine."

At last! At last!

She could hardly withhold the rapturous cry that rose to her lips.

Here was the small seed sown in good ground; if she could but cherish it, cultivate it, watch it, until it grew into a very strong plant.

But she must be careful. Her strong fingers must not grasp it too tightly, or it would perish.

She must not guard it with breath of flame, or it would die.

"No," she replied, slowly. "That is quite an exploded idea. Indeed, the Castlemaine idea of matrimony is altogether out of date. Husband and wife in these days choose their own friends, and go their own way."

"I would never choose a friend whom Rudolph did not like though," said Lady Castlemaine.

Ah, little seed; you were hardly strong enough to plant at present!

"Of course not," replied Isabel, "and that is why I am intruding my advice upon you. If you were to go to Lord Castlemaine now and say to him, 'I have met Colonel Lennox, and I like him. I should like him to be invited to the house,' he with all the Castlemaine obstinacy, would reply 'he did not like him,' decline to invite him, and there would at once be civil war. You see that, Gertrude?"

"Yes," the replied, thoughtfully. "I see it, Isabel."

"Whereas if you are just *un tant soit peu* diplomatic, you need not have one word on the subject."

"But what is your advice?" asked Lady Castlemaine. "You have not given it to me yet."

Resolute as she was, her lips paled, and the hands that held the shining golden hair trembled as she answered—

"I should cultivate a friendship with Colonel Lennox without your husband knowing it; not for long—just for a few days or weeks—then, when you know him pretty well, and have established your friendship, your husband will take it as a matter of course, and there will be nothing said."

"That seems to me a weak argument," said Lady Castlemaine; "still, as you are generally right in what you think, I will be guided by you; but then, Isabel, Rudolph is always out with us."

"Not always! You drive alone in the park seldom at present; he has his club engagements, you go at times to balls without him, and sometimes to the opera."

"I did not know that I was so often parted from him," said the beautiful young wife, half-sadly.

Isabel Hyde had the sense to know that she had said enough.

She was wise enough to know that another word would make Lady Castlemaine espouse her husband's cause, and refuse the friendship of a man whom he did not like.

She turned the conversation to quite another subject, but she knew from the expression of thought on that beautiful face that the seed she had strewn had fallen on good ground.

No truer or more faithful wife lived than Lady Castlemaine. She had no thought, no interest, no care away from her husband; she loved him with true and tender love.

But there was just a spice of romance here that captivated her fancy, to form a friendship with this magnificent man who was a great hero.

There was a gleam of romance, and she had not the faintest idea of evil or harm.

She was to make friends with him first, and her husband afterwards—when she knew him well.

Isabel talked to her of the coming masquerade to be held at Ranelagh House, and which was to be the leading *fete* of the season.

"Have you decided about your costume yet, Gertrude?" she asked.

"No; I have not even begun to think of it. Shall we go as Rebecca and Rowena, Isabel?"

"With only one Ivanhoe between us?" she said laughingly; "oh, no, Gertrude, we must think of something better than that."

She did not fall asleep until morning dawn, for in her own fancy, all that night long she was watching the growth of the little seed she had sown.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE GROWTH OF THE SEED.

DURING the next few days, no matter where Lady Castlemaine went, or whom she met, the conversation seemed to turn always on Colonel Lennox, his bravery and his adventures: the nine days' wonder had not died out and he was still a great hero. No new scandal had been told of him, and there were some people who believed that rumor had exaggerated.

One thing was quite certain; any lady whom he admired became the fashion. He was an authority on the matter of feminine beauty, as on politics and war.

At first people did not notice his devotion to Lady Castlemaine; at first they met but rarely; Lord Castlemaine was his wife's shadow, he was still too much in love with her to be happy for one moment when he was away from her; he disliked all those engagements that kept him from her side, but there were times when it was quite unavoidable.

It did not strike Lady Castlemaine either how strange it was that whenever she went out without her husband the colonel was by her side at once.

Lord Castlemaine could not go to Madame Von Stramsen's ball; it was only at the last moment he found that he must go to Portsmouth to say "good-bye" to an old friend who was sailing away.

Lady Castlemaine and Isabel went together; they had agreed to dress so as to represent their old characters, the white and the red rose.

Lady Castlemaine looked especially charming, she wore a dress of white silk, richly embroidered with fine pearls, and trimmed with sprays of white roses; she wore white rosebuds round the neck of her dress, and a lovely white rose, the ideal of herself, nestled in the coils of her golden hair.

An universal murmur of admiration followed her entrance into the crowded ball-room; and the costume of the red rose was quite as great a success.

The dark, passionate beauty of Isabel Hyde had never shown to greater advantage than in the exquisite dress of pale rose silk, with its elaborate trimmings of pink roses; she wore a small wreath of pink roses in her hair.

Society smiled at seeing its two favorites in their last year's characters.

Two more beautiful women never entered a ball-room.

Strange to say, although on the Saturday morning when they met, Colonel Lennox had told Lady Castlemaine that he should not be at the ball, there he was advancing to meet her with a smile on that bold, handsome face of his, before which, if she had been a wiser woman, she would have fled—or died.

She was surrounded, as usual, by a little crowd of courtiers; he towered above them all.

He took the jewelled tablets from her hand in his most graceful and courtly fashion.

"I mean to be selfish to-night," he said, and Lady Castlemaine saw that he had placed his name against every waltz.

She shook her blonde head gravely at him, and what he thought of the familiarity of the graceful gesture intoxicated him.

There was a spice of romance about it all that amused her.

It was the old story of Hercules and the distaff; of Cleopatra and Mark Antony over again.

To the feminine mind there will always be something delightful in the conquest of strength and bravery.

Lady Castlemaine had not in her mind the faintest suspicion of evil.

She had regretted with most bitter regret that her husband had not been able to accompany her; but there was something of romance that every time the music of a waltz sounded, this magnificent colonel eagerly sought her.

She had no idea of doing anything that was in the least degree out of the way or unseemly; but he charmed her so that she forgot everything else and longed for his conversation again.

There was never a wooer so eloquent as he. He told her stories, anecdotes, adventures; some full of rollicking sport, some of infinite pathos; all as pure as though he had been conversing with an angel, but they interested and amused her. When he left her she looked forward with eagerness to their next interview.

He danced with her so often that evening and made himself so conspicuous by his devotion to her that Isabel thought it prudent to administer a warning.

It would not do for strong or untrained hands to force the seed which she had sown with such care.

"Gertrude," she whispered; "I would not dance again with Colonel Lennox."

"Why?" she asked impatiently.

"The reason is obvious," said Miss Hyde; "that was your third waltz, and people are beginning to look at you."

"To look at me!" cried Lady Castlemaine. "What for? Why should they look at me?"

Isabel Hyde shrugged her beautiful shoulders.

"You know how some people talk," she said. "Suppose that to-morrow someone jests to Lord Castlemaine about the number of times you have waltzed with the handsome colonel; you would not like it!"

"No," she replied, slowly. "I might not like it, but I do not see that it could matter much."

As it was in this case, so in every other; no matter where she appeared, there, sooner or later, came Colonel Lennox.

"I could almost believe," she said, laughingly, to him one morning, "that you must receive a telegram from the birds when and where I am going."

She did not notice the sudden flush on his face, nor the still more suspicious fact that Isabel Hyde had turned quickly aside, as though she did not care to hear the words.

Twice when she was out in the park, once at the garden party, and once at the Zoo, she had met him when she was with Isabel and he had made so much of those occasions that she began to look upon him quite as an old friend.

She had never meant any concealment, disguise, any deceit; least of all had she thought in any way of keeping secrets from her husband.

She had merely carelessly followed Isabel's advice not to speak to her husband just at first about it.

She was too young, and too guileless at heart to think much of it, or to see any evil in it.

She was on friendly terms with him now; she had met him twice at Lady Cresson's—at five o'clock tea—and they had talked on until Lady Castlemaine had been compelled to drive home quickly, and had a very narrow escape of being late for dinner.

She was less on her guard now, and after dinner, during a long conversation which took place on the different stations of men, their different employments and professions Lady Castlemaine said suddenly—

"I like soldiers best. If I were a man I would neither be a lawyer, a doctor, a politician, nor anything else but a soldier."

It was curious how strange a silence followed this remark. Lord Castlemaine looked at his wife.

"You have but few opportunities of studying the different professions, Gertrude. What makes you say that?"

She was conscious in one moment of her own indiscretion, and hesitated to cover it.

"Soldiers are heroes!" she said.

Lord Castlemaine laughed.

"Some of them are very far from it," answered Lord Castlemaine.

Yes, they were quite good friends now; they met with smiles, parted with regret, thought with pleasure of the next interview.

On her side there was nothing but the feeling of great interest, of quiet amusement, of hero-worship.

On his there was the consciousness that he loved for the first time in his life, and with all the desperation of a man's first passion.

Verily, the little seed was growing, and would soon be a strong plant!

Then he became impatient to see more of her, and that could not be done unless he knew her husband and could call at the house.

"The Lady of Neath," he called her in his own mind, and he wished that the days of chivalry were back again that he might proclaim himself her knight, fight for her, die for her.

All his past wicked life seemed to rise up in vengeance against him now that he was earnestly and deeply in love. What a wretched past!

What shameful memories! what horrible reminiscences!

"But she will never know," he said to himself; "no one will ever tell her. In her beautiful eyes I shall always be a great hero, and I want no more."

But he must see her oftener; he could no longer bear that a whole twenty-four hours should pass without one glimpse of her.

"I should like to know Lord Castlemaine," he said to her one day.

"Nothing would be easier," she replied.

"Will you introduce me, Lady Castlemaine?" he asked.

"Yes, I will with pleasure," she replied. "Five o'clock tea is quite an institution at Neath House; will you call to-morrow and take a cup with us?"

"I shall be most charmed and happy," he replied. "It is the desire of my heart to visit your home."

Again a slight frown on her face warned him.

"I have been told," he continued, "that Neath House is one of the finest mansions in town, and I admire beautiful houses."

"A strange taste for a soldier!" she replied, laughingly.

"I like a camp better!" he cried; but she would not believe him, and playfully called him a carpet knight.

They laughed and jested, and were more friendly and more familiar than they had ever been before.

She was pleased at the idea that he should visit her; pleased that he was coming to the house; pleased that he should wish to know her husband; but there was no time to speak of it.

That evening she went to two different balls, and the next morning she was too tired to remember it.

She had been anxious to tell Isabel, but in the varied engagements of the day, she forgot all about it.

As events turned out it did not much matter; but it is possible that if she had told her husband that morning who was to be her guest in the evening, a tragedy might have been averted.

CHAPTER XX.

A FIVE O'CLOCK TEA.

THE drawing-room at Neath House was a magnificent room; it ran along the whole length of the building; it held six large windows, and opened on to a balcony that was always filled with fairest flowers—all the flowers that Lady Castlemaine liked best; small clusters of white lilacs, the lovely narcissus, the white daphne, the white rose, which was to be seen everywhere. It was a room as bright as sunshine, flowers, light and magnificence could make it.

The five o'clock teas at Neath House were an institution, but Lady Castlemaine was very particular as to who attended.

The invitees were all her own particular and intimate friends, and she was much beloved in general society.

She enjoyed social life; to see herself surrounded by fair young girls, by witty and piquant matrons was a pleasure to her.

She enjoyed those little reunions; she liked to hear the last anecdote, the last new novel discussed, the last new fashion commented upon, the newest engagement, the last fashionable marriage.

All were conned over with many a merry laugh and jest.

The ladies wore such pretty dresses; the colors were so beautiful; the sound of the silvery voices and laughter was so sweet. Lady Castlemaine's teas were famous; those who had been once longed to go again.

On this evening, when Colonel Lennox was to pay his first visit to the house, Lady Castlemaine looked more lovely than usual.

She was thinking a little of him when she chose that most exquisite of tea-gowns, it was a combination of pale blue velvet and white silk—it was impossible to tell where one began and the other ended.

On her golden hair lay the loveliest little fleecy of a cap; her white hands shone with jewels.

The little table before her was a poem in itself; the old-fashioned silver service, the Sevres china, delicate and beautiful as flowers; the fragrant tea; the thick rich cream fresh from the country; and Lady Castlemaine, while she dispensed tea with her own fair hands, led the conversation.

She was the wittiest, the quickest in repartee in all that brilliant band of beautiful women.

Isabel Hyde wore a tea-gown elaborately constructed of fawn-colored velvet and tea-rose silk, the soft neutral tints of which made her beautiful face look so much the brighter.

There was only one drawback to the perfect happiness of the beautiful mistress of that magnificent house, as she sat there, and it was that her husband was absent. All her favorite friends were present.

Miss Hyde, who was still visiting Neath House; the young and most vivacious Countess of Erksdale, who could talk twice as much and twice as long as any other lady. There was the beautiful but "frisky" young matron, the Duchess of Westwater, who had the candid blue eyes of a child, with a mind full of wit and mischief; there was the sweet-faced, sentimental Lady Brechman, who thought nothing more substantial than flowers worth discussing; Lady Westlake, the leader of the esthetic school, who almost died over a sunflower, and went into ecstacies over a lily.

There was the lively and coquettish young Marchioness of Heather, who made war all around.

Her eyes like arrows, pierced the hearts of the men who gazed upon her, and she had nothing to offer by way of consolation; there was Miss Grantley, the famous heiress, who never opened her mouth but to utter an epigram; there was the famous poet, Oswald Kylde, the writer of the last new novel which had driven the fiction-loving portion of the public mad—"Mr. White."

Neither wit, wisdom, nor beauty were wanting, and Lady Castlemaine as she gracefully dispensed the Sevres cups, seemed to hold all the threads of the different conversations in her own hands; it was she who pointed the sharp arrows of wit; it was she who called forth the thoughts and ideas of others; it was she who seemed to bring her visitors nearer together, mind to mind. Isabel looked at her with eyes of envy.

"I should have been just such another hostess," she said to herself, "if these rooms had been, as they ought to have been, mine."

There was a slight stir when Colonel Lennox was announced.

Most of the ladies knew him well; the Duchess of Westwater admired him, and her blue eyes were never more beautiful than when they were raised with the candor of childhood to his.

Lady Westlake sighed at the mention of his name, there was nothing of the esthetic about him.

The Marchioness of Heather delighted in him.

She liked his stories, his adventures, and not being one of the most scrupulous of womenkind did not dislike him any the more for his character of gallant man.

Colonel Lennox looked neither to the right nor to the left; he went to the beautiful hostess, found a seat by her side, and asked for a cup of tea from her hands. She gave it to him.

He enjoyed the whole situation: the magnificent room with its wealth of fragrant flowers, the beautiful and witty women, the clever men: he enjoyed the conversation, the wit, the repartees.

Under cover of a general laugh raised by the Marchioness of Heather, Isabel said to Lady Castlemaine—

"You did not tell me that Colonel Lennox was coming."

"No," was the frank reply, "I forgot."

"Forgot!"

The word made Isabel shudder. If she had indeed forgotten, evidently her mind was not filled by him.

"He wants to know Rudolph," she continued, carelessly, "and I thought this a very pleasant time for an introduction."

"There could be no better," replied Isabel.

On the table near her, lay a spray of white lilac that some careless lady had let fall from a bouquet. She raised it and held it to her lips.

The words she whispered in it were the same as those she had uttered in the church on the wedding day, and when she raised her face again there was a smile on it not good to see.

"This must be a ladies' Paradise," said Colonel Lennox. "I wonder what the world did before the luxury of tea was discovered?"

"Pretty much the same as it does now," said Lady Heather. "There must always have been something to drink—something cheerful and enlivening, even for savages. Have you seen the famous new picture at the Gallery, Colonel Lennox?"

"I have had so many engagements," he replied, "that I have not time to see one half that I want to see."

"The prettiest sight that I have seen is the large grove of chestnuts in Richmond Park, said Lady Westlake.

"I quite agree with you, Lady Westlake," said the poet.

Colonel Lennox turned to his beautiful hostess.

"My bachelor quarters are so limited," he said, "I am most unfortunately prevented from returning the hospitality pressed upon me, but I have had daring, and I believe original thoughts of giving a dinner at Richmond, if I could only persuade some kind and gracious lady to help me."

"You would have no difficulty in that," she said.

But he observed that she was careful not to offer her aid.

"If I am fortunate enough to succeed in my efforts," he said, "you will promise to be the queen of my little festivity?"

At almost any other time she would have answered "Yes," without a thought; but there came to her mind a sudden recollection that until Colonel Lennox had been introduced to her husband, she could not accept any such invitation.

"I must have time to think of it," she replied.

"I shall live on the hope of it," he said. "I am sorry Lord Castlemaine is not at home."

"He was sent for quite unexpectedly about two hours ago. He seldom misses this tea hour."

"I should imagine not, for it is a very happy one," said Colonel Lennox.

He wanted, if possibly could, to get her away from these brilliant and happy people.

It was the first time he had been to her home, and he wanted to make a sentimental occasion of it, and she had no notion of the kind.

How earnestly he wished that those pretty women would put down their teacups and go.

Surely there had been tea enough for all.

For a few minutes he almost hated Lady Heather, whose vivacious anecdotes kept everyone in continual laughter.

If they would but go! It was his first visit to the house, and he wanted to say a few words to her.

How was it possible?

The great poet sat silently watching him, feeling in his heart sorry to see Colonel Lennox on such friendly terms with beautiful Lady Castlemaine.

He knew him, knew the truth of all the stories that were told about him, knew what his reputation really was.

"If I had a young and lovely wife like that," he said to himself, "Colonel Lennox would find no place in my drawing-room."

But then, he was a poet, and poets take a strange view of things.

Then, to the colonel's great relief, Lady Heather rose, one or two others followed her example, and a small, laughing group made for the door.

The poet remained; he had seen the impatience on that bold, handsome face, and he understood.

"This is one of his old tricks," he said to himself; "he wants to talk to Lady Castlemaine, and he wishes that we would all go away. I for one shall not oblige him."

The colonel stayed, and the poet stayed, until Isabel Hyde, with her usual quickness, guessed at the situation, and came to the rescue.

She went up to the poet—

"Have you seen Lady Castlemaine's portrait?" she asked. "Millais only finished it last week."

"No! I have not seen it, but shall of course be delighted!" and Miss Hyde led him to the library, where the picture hung.

The colonel blessed her in his heart. Then he turned to his beautiful little hostess—

"I am glad to have a chance of saying just one word to you," he said, hurriedly. "I thought they would never go."

"I did not want them to go," she said, coldly.

"I did!" he cried. "I wanted to tell you what an infinite pleasure this, my first visit to you, gives me."

She laughed a proud, careless laugh, that cut him like a knife.

"I do not see," she said, "why you need wish my friends gone, in order that you might make a simple speech like that."

"Give me something to remember it by!" he asked. "Give me the rose you have worn all the evening!"

She looked at it, then at him.

"I think not!" she replied. "The giving of a flower means much or little; in the first case, I should not give it; in the second case, it would not really be worth having."

Later on that evening, Isabel Hyde stood by her dressing-room fire; she slowly pulled out the leaves of a white rose and watched them shrivel and burn in the flame.

CHAPTER XXI.

LADY DENHAM'S MASQUERADE.

In fashionable life one gaiety succeeds the other so quickly that there is hardly time for any entertainment to make much impression.

Lady Denham's masquerade was quite another affair.

It was to be held at Denham House, and was the fete of the season.

The memory of it was to live in the mind of man.

Denham House was well suited for an entertainment of this kind; the suite of rooms that opened into the ball-room was magnificent; the ball-room itself opened into a large and lofty conservatory that led again into an exquisite little fernery, a rare thing to find even in a Hyde Park mansion; at the end of the fernery were two large glass doors that opened on to the lawn.

They were all on a perfectly straight line, so that it was possible to stand in the ball-room and watch the crescent moon rise in the sky.

Most people pronounced Denham House to be one of the finest mansions in London.

It had certainly the largest conservatory and the most extensive grounds.

On the night of the fete the May moon shining very brightly, so brightly as to form a beauty in itself that no art could imitate.

The yellow lamps, half hidden in the trees, although they were like great golden stars, had no such light as the lady moon; a crescent moon rising in a clear blue night sky.

Ah! what it is to be wealthy, to be able to surround one's self with all that there is of the most beautiful, the most exquisite; to be able to make a fairy land even more lovely than that which the fairies made for themselves; to have the power of carrying out every beautiful idea that comes to an artistic mind. Lady Denham was able to do this.

Lady Denham or her guests could walk from the great drawing-room, where the hangings were of white and gold, through the smaller room, where the hangings were of palest blue, and where two of Claude Lorraine's finest landscapes hung: through a third superb room that held every luxury which art or money could procure; through the magnificent ball-room, with its painted ceiling, its fine statues, and grand decorations; through the great domed conservatory, where flowers of the richest color gave forth the sweetest perfume; through the cool green fernery, where the lights were dim and the constant sound of water dripping from the rocks was heard; through to the green lawn, where tall noble trees lent their shade, and pretty fountains threw their silvery spray high into the air.

A perfect fairyland!

It had all the charm and the beauty of a town residence, combined with many of the advantages of the country.

The place above all others for a masquerade.

One could imagine a golden-haired Undine amongst the rock work, the cool ferns, and the tiny silvery streams of the fernery; one could fancy Juliet, Rosamond, and Viola in the conservatory flitting daintily amongst the bright blossoms; just as one might fancy royal women sweeping through that superb suite of rooms.

The roll of carriages was like the distant reverberation of thunder; on this, the night of the fete, vast crowds had assembled hoping to catch even one glimpse of the brilliant figures that emerged from them; the house was like a paradise of flowers and lights; the brilliant rooms were not crowded, but they were well filled with guests. Never was scene more beautiful, more dazzling, more brilliant.

Mary of Scotland, in coif and veil, with a silver rosary shining on her black velvet dress; the Royal Elizabeth, in cloth of gold and jeweled crown; Catharine of Valois, fair of face and stately of mein; Catharine de Medici, magnificent and imperious; Joan of Arc, tall and fair; Marguerite, with a wreath of golden hair; Cleopatra, with the imperial robes of an empress.

On they swept, that procession of brilliant women; every epoch in history, every figure most remarkable in art, in fiction, in poetry, was there.

Undine, looking as though she had just risen from the fountain; Beatrice Cenci, Amy Robsart, Di Vernon; a brilliant, yet in some respects, a motley crowd.

Italian peasants, Italian brigands, French chevaliers, Spanish grandees, gipsies, Swiss mountaineers.

Some of the gentlemen wore the richest and most picturesque of dresses.

There was Richard Cœur-de-Lion, the Black Prince, at least four Charles'.

One of the most striking figures in the room was that of a Knight Templar, in the picturesque attire of his order.

All wore masks, and no mask was to be removed until supper-time.

The disguises were good and well sustained.

Lady Westlake, who represented a water lily, talked for twenty minutes with Oswald Kilde, the poet, without recognizing him, although he was dressed as a troubador, and she raved afterwards about the troubadour she had met at the ball and declared that the one longing of her life was to meet him again.

Lady Heather went as Flora Macdonald, and was one of the most animated figures in the scene.

Troubadors, fairies, gipsies, all in one gay mad whirl!

The Knight Templar was conspicuous amongst the men, and a masked figure, called the "Snow Queen," was conspicuous amongst the women—tall and dazzlingly white.

A slender figure, which was the perfection of girlish grace — a perfect Snow Queen.

Her dress was of white velvet; the snow was represented by the finest and whitest of swansdown; the icicles by diamonds; the rounded white arms were bare to the shoulders; the graceful neck clasped by a necklace of what looked like frosted diamonds, so white, so virginal, so dazzling beautiful, so radiantly fair, that the "Snow Queen" was pronounced on all sides the greatest success.

Another very beautiful figure was called "Dawn."

This was also a tall, graceful figure, draped in pale rose-colored velvet, in which were faint flecks of gold.

Diamonds formed so as to represent a crown of stars graced a beautiful, queenly head.

"Dawn" was closely masked, and wore her disguise well.

The "Snow Queen" was Lady Castlemaine; "Dawn" was Isabel Hyde. Lord Castlemaine wore the handsome picturesque dress of a Venetian noble.

The only person who seemed to recognise Lady Castlemaine was Lady Heather.

"I should know you," she whispered, "where a thousand others would fail. You are taller than most of the ladies present, and I should know you anywhere by the carriage of your head. I shall not betray you, though," she added, "I am going to take advantage of the masks, and speak my mind to several people to-night."

"That will not be an unusual luxury for you," was the laughing reply.

"It will, in the fashion I shall do it to-night," she answered. "I think the chief beauty of a masquerade is that for once one may do just what one likes."

As the hours passed, the scene grew more brilliant, the lights seemed to grow brighter the scene more like fairyland.

An artist who could have sketched some of those groups would have made his fortune by the beauty of his painting.

There was one group that drew much attention: Undine, in her white dress and white water-lilies, contrasting with Mary Stuart, in her rich, black velvet; the Venetian noble in his superb costume of crimson velvet and point lace.

They were only together for a few minutes; but no picture could have been more beautiful.

As the dancers danced together, as the different groups formed and re-formed, it seemed as though all the varied colors of the rainbow met and broke up, and then softened into a thousand gleaming lights and shades.

Where the radiant Snow Queen stood, or danced, or sat, she seemed to make the light brighter.

The Knight Templar walked about restlessly, he had not as yet penetrated the secrets of the different disguises.

His attention had been drawn for some time to the Snow Queen.

He half imagined that it must be Lady Castlemaine.

She was tall, and had such a peculiarly proud carriage of the head.

He smiled, as he thought to himself that it was hardly wonderful that he should not know her when her face was hidden, for all the time he had passed with her had been spent in watching the perfection of that face.

If it were Lady Castlemaine, he resolved upon beguiling her into a long conversation with him. He would persuade her to go into the conservatory, where the flowers breathed such rich perfume; into the cool, green fernery, where the moonlight was brighter than the faint glow of the lamps, and he would see if the future held any hope for him.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE GERMAN AMBROSIA.—The ordinary reader undoubtedly knows something in a general way about the baker's art, but in a cosmopolitan city there are about as many varieties of the staff of life as there are nationalities. The pretzel is peculiar to the German table, and perhaps the process of preparing it is less familiar in this country than that of any other article of food. Flour, yeast, water and a great deal of salt are the sole ingredients of which the dough out of which the pretzel is evolved is composed. It is tough and heavy, and after being well kneaded is placed in great heaps on a long table in front of the workmen.

They grab it up by handfuls, roll it out in long, thin strips, and then curl and twist it up into the queer shapes in which it makes its appearance in beer saloons and on cheap lunch counters. A journeyman baker is expected to make one pretzel every two seconds.

After it has assumed its definite form it is laid upon a wooden rack in the middle of the room. Rack after rack is thus filled, and they are piled one above another. Each one contains 100 pretzels.

A thousand are generally prepared for the oven before the baking begins. The ovens are of enormous size. The pretzels are baked very thoroughly, and regarded as especially wholesome for this reason.

Then comes the most singular part of the process. Racks, charged with pretzels, are dipped in a weak solution of lye, the effect of which is to give to their surface a bright and glossy appearance. After being thickly sprinkled with salt they are ready for sale. Those that are intended for shipment or to be kept for some time, undergo an additional process. They are placed in a steam box, and remain there two or three hours. This sort of cure makes them proof against mold or souring for months. One of the greatest peculiarities of pretzels is their salty taste, and they conduce to the greater consumption of liquids. But so much salt is used simply for the purpose of preventing them from becoming stale. They are a favorite part of the rations of the Prussian army.

Bric-a-Brac.

"A FEATHER IN YOUR HAT.—This phrase is an allusion to the custom among barbarians of adding a new feather to their headgear for every enemy slain. The natives of Cabul stick a feather in their turban whenever they kill a Mussulman. In Scotland the sportsman wears a feather in his cap—a feather from the first woodcock shot by him.

DOORS AND WINDOWS.—The magnitude of the Escurial, the great Spanish palace, may be inferred from the computation of Francisco de los Santos that it would take four days to go through all the rooms and apartments, the length of the way being reckoned at twenty-three Spanish leagues, which is about 120 English. There are 14,000 doors and 11,000 windows in the edifice.

CHINESE NEWSPAPERS.—Along the upper border of Chinese newspapers where we usually place the title and date, is written the exhortation "Please respect written paper; the merit is boundless"—an exhortation that is generally heeded, for the papers are carefully filed in shop and office, and read and re-read until at last they fall to pieces. Then a man from the society that takes written paper for its special care comes and takes away the well thumbed printed rags and tatters to be reverently burnt in a crematorium attached to the Literary and Military Temple.

THE MEANEST MAN.—The champion mean man has turned up in the shape of a Bostonian. A South Boston man recently built two houses, side by side—one for himself and one to sell. In the house sold he had placed a furnace against the party wall of the cellar, and from its hot air chamber he had constructed flues to heat his own domicile. The owner of the other house found it very hard to keep his house warm, and was astonished at the amount of coal required to keep his family comfortable, while the dishonest builder kept himself warm at his neighbor's expense nearly a whole winter before the trick was discovered.

THE WHITE HOUSE.—A good many people are puzzled when asked the reason why the President's residence at Washington is called the 'White House.' The origin of the name is as follows:—'When the British, in 1814, took Washington, they destroyed the public buildings, including the President's mansion, which, like the capital, was built of grayish sandstone. The burning of the woodwork smoked and discolored the stone walls, the natural appearance of which could not be restored. Uniformity was secured by the application of white paint. The changed appearance from gray to white attracted attention, and gave it the appellation of the "White House," which it has since borne.'

FASHIONABLE BURGLARS.—A well-to-do burglar has just been detected and arrested in England. He rented a respectable cottage at Ashton, and was a regular attendant at church, his son and daughter being in good situations in Birmingham. When the police searched his house they found an enormous quantity of fine electro plated goods, a set of valuable diamond studs, and much other stolen property. A large part of the electro-plate has been traced as having been stolen from the houses of newly-married people. The police suspect that the prisoner attended church merely for the purpose of tracing by the reading of the bans newly-married people whom to plunder of their marriage presents. There had been a recent marriage in the house in which he was caught.

ABOUT BABIES.—Different countries have different methods of dealing with their young. The Greenland baby is dressed in furs and carried in a sort of pocket in the back of his mother's cloak. When she is very busy and does not want to be bothered with him, she digs a hole in the snow and covers him all up but his face and leaves him there until she is ready to take care of him again. The Hindoo baby hangs in a basket from the roof, and is taught to smoke long before he learns to walk. Among the Western Indians the poor little tots are tied fast to a board and have their heads flattened by means of another board fastened down over their foreheads. In Lima, the little fellow lies all day in a hammock swung from a tree top, like the baby in a nursery song. In Persia, he is dressed in the most costly silks and jewels, and his head is never uncovered, day or night, while in Yucatan a pair of sandals and a straw hat are thought to be all the clothing he needs.

CHURCH PEWS.—In the early days of Anglo Saxon and some of the Norman Churches, a stone bench running round the interior of the church, except the east side, was the only sitting accommodation of the visitors. In 1319 the people are represented as sitting on the ground or standing. A little later the people introduced low, three-legged stools promiscuously over the church. Soon after the Norman conquest wooden seats were introduced. In 1327 a decree was issued in regard to the wrangling for seats, so common, that none should call any seat in church his own except noblemen or patrons, each entering and holding the one he first found. From 1530 to 1540 seats were more appropriated; a cross-bar guarded the entrance, bearing the initial letters of the owner. In 1608 galleries were introduced, and as early as 1614 pews were arranged to afford comfort by being boxed or cushioned, while the sides around were so high as to hide the occupants, a device of the Puritans to avoid being seen by the officers who reported those who did not bow when the name of Jesus was mentioned.

THE STREAM OF DEATH.

There is a stream whose narrow tide
The known and unknown worlds divide
Where all must go!
Its wayless waters, dark and deep,
'Mid sudden silence downward sweep
With moanless flow.

I saw where, at that dreary flood,
A smiling infant prattling stood,
Whose hour was come;
Untaught of ill, it neared the tide,
Sank, as to cradle rest, and died,
Like going home.

Followed with languid eye, anon,
A youth, diseased, and pale and wan:
And there alone
He gazed upon the leaden stream,
And feared to plunge—I heard a scream,
And he was gone.

And then a foam in manhood's strength
Came hustling on, till there at length
He saw life's bound;
He shrank, and raised life's bitter prayer
Too late—his shriek of wild despair
The waters drowned.

Next stood upon that surgeless shore
A being bowed with many a score
Of toilsome years;
Earthborne and sad he left the bank,
Back turned his dimming eye and sank,
Ah! full of years.

How bitter must thy waters be,
Oh, death—how hard a thing, ah me,
It is to die!
I mused, when to that stream again
Another child of mortal men
With smiles drew nigh.

'Tis the last pang, he calmly said;
To me, oh Death, thou hast no dread:
Saviour, I come
Spread but Thy arms on yonder shore,
I see—ye waters bear me o'er.
There is my home.

To Love and Honor.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DOLLY'S LUCK," "PEGGY," "TWO BRIDAL EYES," "A SHOCKING SCANDAL," "THE WYCHFIELD HORROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.—[CONTINUED.]

HE calls for water, and presses closely to the pale girl's side.

She draws back as though the contact hurt her: and, when she speaks, it is to the notary she addresses herself.

"I do not think you understand, monsieur," she says with simple dignity and a calm distinctness that surprises herself. "There can be no question of the legality of my marriage, even if Monsieur St. Just were base enough to deny it."

"Pardon, mademoiselle," interjects the elder St. Just, with a bow of exquisite politeness, "my son has no such dishonorable thought. He owns that your character is above reproach; he does not deny that he has gone through the ceremony of marriage with you, he merely protests that the marriage was illegal."

Cressida never turns her head or answers his address, never once turns her eyes to that remoter corner, where, with white face, set lips, and glittering eyes, her traitor-husband stands.

Did she once meet his gaze, she knows that the fierce scorn and burning indignation she holds so hardly in check would overwhelm and master her, sweeping away all the coolness and courage of which she stands in such desperate need.

So she stares steadily at Monsieur Bertrand's impassive face, and speaks to him, as though they two were alone in the room.

"I am very young, monsieur," she goes on in the same tone of forced monotonous calm; "but I am neither a child nor an idiot. I was married in church after due publication of the banns, in presence of any number of producible witnesses, which the sanction of my only guardians and friends; I do not know much of legal matters truly, but it seems to me it would be hard to find a flaw in such a marriage as that."

"In England it would be impossible," the lawyer admits placidly; "but you overlook one important feature in the case. Monsieur St. Just is a French citizen, and in an event like his marriage will abide by the regulations of the French law. Perhaps you are not acquainted with the difference in the code of the two countries."

He pauses and waits the answer that comes slowly and with difficulty from the stiff white lips, though the proud anguished eyes never droop or wander from his face.

"I am very ignorant, monsieur; I was a schoolgirl a year ago. I know only that as surely as I live and breathe, as surely as Heaven's law and man's can make a marriage, I am the wife of Isidore St. Just."

There is a slight movement in the shadowed corner where the two St. Justs stand.

Cressida does not look round, she will not, and she dare not; but some instinct tells her that her husband has made a swift movement towards the door, that only his father's grasp restrains him.

Monsieur Bertrand shrugs his shoulders and surveys the pale young face through his green glasses with professional contempt, yet a faint far-off gleam of pity too.

How stupidly she takes the blow—how absurd these English are!

No French girl could get into such a fix, but being in, she would surely try to extricate herself with grace; and yet she is so young—so pretty; it is hard, no doubt—

"Pray be seated, madame"—pushing forward a chair, and according her the title of honor he has hitherto scrupulously denied. "I have a painful—a very painful duty to perform in the interest of my clients, the Messieurs St. Just, father and son. Believe me, I sympathise deeply with your unfortunate position. Will you feel for mine, and lighten its difficulties by according a patient hearing?"

Cressida bows her head gravely.

She does not accept the chair he offers; but she rests her small tightly-locked hands upon its tall carved back.

She will stand to hear her doom, as the prisoner stands to receive the death-sentence.

For a second Monsieur Bertrand looks away from the steadfast anguish of the wide brown eyes, and towards his clients, as though to find some sign that they relented in their purpose; but there is none.

Isidore's face is white almost as his wife's; but there is no softening in the handsome sullen eyes, no relaxing in the set lines of the cruel lips, while Monsieur St. Just, pere, nods his gray bullet-shaped head significantly; and, with a short dry cough, the lawyer proceeds with his task.

"Monsieur St. Just tells me, madame, that you are wholly unacquainted with the article in the French code relating to the marriage of minors. Is that so?"

"Certainly, monsieur."

"That is unfortunate, very unfortunate," he says, in the same dry unimpassioned tone, but looking straight over the graceful head; "because it is precisely that article that deprives you of all legal status and invalidates your marriage.

"Pray hear me out patiently," he adds more quickly, as Cressida is about to interrupt him with a passionate exclamation. "I do not for a moment deny that you are in England a wife; but in France no minor can contract a marriage without the formal consent of his parents, and in this case that consent is distinctly refused."

"Is distinctly refused," Monsieur St. Just echoes in a complacent husky baritone. "Isidore was a minor, a child, when he went through this farce which mademoiselle would treat as a serious fact!"

The lawyer shrugs his shoulders, impatient of an interruption which he mentally stigmatises as in infamous taste.

Cressida still looks only at him, and says in slow chill tones—

"Monsieur St. Just was twenty-three and I sixteen, or so our ages were entered in the church register——"

"Precisely, madame; he does not attain his majority until he has reached his twenty-fifth birthday; consequently," he pauses, as though even he, case-hardened and callous as he is, hesitated to speak the words that branded the innocent young life with an ineffaceable disgrace and shame.

But Monsieur St. Just has no such scruples; he is what he himself describes as a thoroughly practical man, who likes to see a fair case fairly stated, who has no morbid sensitiveness either for himself or other people, and prides himself upon the fact.

He has delegated the present task to his lawyer, not because the other has a professional knack of stating facts clearly and concisely.

This knack however has, in Monsieur St. Just's opinion, lamentably failed him now; so, with little hesitation, but much of irritation and contempt, he takes the explanatory duty into his own capable hands.

"Listen to me, madame!" he says, in a very decisive fashion. "We only tell you the facts, we do not criticise the extreme imprudence of my son or your guardians' culpable negligence.

"Isidore, being a minor, you have in France no shadow of a claim upon him; he is free to marry to-morrow if he pleases. It sounds harsh, perhaps; but Monsieur Bertrand, and all the lawyers in France, for that matter, will tell you it is the law of the land."

As Cressida listens to the words that drive her into a dark outer world of which she knows nothing, that take from her name and fame and home, she raises her eyes and seems to see Isidore's face as she has never seen it yet.

In that lightning-like glance the last grain of her childish love for the handsome Frenchman who had dazzled her dies out of her heart, and something like loathing terror takes its place.

She clasps her hands before her face, and staggers back against the wall, growing so deadly white that they think she is about to faint; but she controls herself quickly, and turns to Monsieur Bertrand, who is arranging papers in their pigeon-holes with studied carelessness.

"This is quite true?"

"Quite," he assents gravely. "I have no interest in deceiving you, ma fame; I feel deeply for your false position"

She shudders a little, but does not drop the large eyes that are tearless and unnaturally bright, as she says very quietly—

"Thank you; then my business here is done."

She is moving mechanically to the door, when the elder St. Just interrupts her.

Her calmness deceives him, acute as he is.

He thinks she is taking things beautifully, with true British phlegm, and his face beams with benevolence and friendly feeling.

"Not quite, mademoiselle, madame, I should say, for by every moral right the more honorable title is yours, but what will you? When the laws of nations differ, we each, of course, abide by our own. Bah! We have settled with the past, it was a grand error, let it go!" and he puffed out his lips as though blowing some airy morsel away. "Now, in the most grateful and liberal spirit, I wish to consider your future."

The words seem to break the strong spell that has hitherto fettered and held her speechless.

She claps her hands with a sudden vehement movement, and breaks into a bitter ringing laugh that is painful to hear.

"My future!" she echoes, with such fierce biting scorn that the man moves uneasily away, and wishes he had let Monsieur Bertrand conclude the business in his own fashion. "Is there any one in this world whom that future concerns so little as it does you and your son, monsieur?"

"Talk heroics if you please," he says sullenly. "I am a practical man, madame, and it was of your practical needs I thought. I am willing to settle a sum of money upon you; I do not deny that you have been very badly used; there is a debt between us!"

"There is, and Heaven will pay it!" the girl cries, with a sudden intensity of conviction that thrills and frightens him. "Let me pass, monsieur, and spare me this last of my many wrongs; you have not dragged me down so far that I can touch your money!"

He allows her to pass without another word; speech seems to forsake him, and round his heart there curdles a chill sick fear.

Victory is his, a triumph absolute and complete; the routed enemy has abandoned the field with a hint of return; and yet, as he wipes the great drops of perspiration from his brow with a huge bandana handkerchief, and stares stupidly at the green baize door through which his adversary has vanished, he admits that such another victory would be tantamount to a defeat.

"Mon Dieu, Isidore! Why did you not tell me that your belle Anglais was such a fury? Your life, la-bas, has been no couch of roses; thou art very well out of that galere."

Isidore smiles, a cold faint smile, but gives no verbal answer.

His conscience is infinitesimal, and his nerves are steel-strung; but, while his father speaks of Cressida's temper he thinks of the one year they have spent together, of her unvarying patience, her unchanging gentleness, her childish love and trust; and remembering this, he does not find it easy to answer.

"What will she do now? She has no money," the father goes on musingly. And Isidore answers with abrupt irritation:

"None! We must seek her out to-morrow. I can bear no more to-day."

And with these words he turns on his heel and quits the office, leaving his father to follow or not at his pleasure.

In the meantime Cressida, with an odd stunned feeling, walks through the strange and busy streets, much as she might walk them in her sleep.

She has suffered the cruellest wrong that woman can suffer.

A wife and no wife, friendless, homeless, and all but penniless, she stands alone in a strange land.

Yet she is conscious of no acute mental agony.

Just now she only knows that something very terrible has come to pass, and changed the whole complexion of her life.

She tired, for she has known no rest after the sea passage and double railway-journey; she is faint, for no crumb has passed her lips since she left the English shore; but she is not conscious that sleep and food might save her reason, and keep her from that gulf into which she is slipping very fast.

Something within her urges her more on and on, as though in some fashion she could outpace the cruel destiny that pursues her.

So hour after hour she walks on through the Paris streets, the hot asphalt blistering her feet, the sun pouring upon her aching head.

Once or twice she pauses at the fountains on the Boulevards, and drinks thirstily of the sparkling water, while the passers-by stare curiously at the beautiful bewildered "lost"-looking face.

But no one speaks to her, and she passes unheeding on her way.

Poor as she is, she might eat if she chose for there are still a few shillings in her pocket; but the hot fumes of the various confectioners' shops create only a deadly nausea within her, and she passes them quickly by with averted head.

At last, as the sun sinks lower and lower, and the evening shadows fall, she creeps wearily to one of the remoter bridges that span the narrow river, and rests her dazzled eyes by gazing at the cool dark stream below.

"How placid it looks," she thinks, a little enviously, "how good it would be to lie quietly at rest there!"

She has no definite purposes in coming here.

She no more thinks of suicide than does the little English terrier that licks the hot drooping hand, and stares with round wistful brown eyes into the fevered face, until he is called off by the two ladies who own him, one of whom looks back with a gleam of interest in her bright black eyes.

"Polo has good taste, grandmamma; I never saw a prettier face than that girl's nor a more wretched one."

But the grandmother's sympathies are less on the surface, and is more awake to the necessity of not wasting time.

So she does not turn her head, only sighs a little wearily, and says with a wistful smile:

"Poor girl! It is no grief that you can lighten, I am afraid. When you are of my age, Florence, you will learn that you must not look at all the misery around you, or your mind will be filled with pain-pictures only," a piece of life-philosophy which pretty Florence Carmichael finds it hard indeed to accept, and of which Lady Gordon herself is destined to repent in the days to come.

"There is Frank!" the girl cries eagerly, as her bright eyes flash over the bridge, and meet those of a young oarsman below. "Oh grandmamma, do make haste, or we shall miss him!"

So, the prospect of pleasure banishing all sympathy with pain, the bright young girl passes on, and Cressida is once more alone with her fate.

It comes with fierce strides now; it stands pale and stern and menacing, above her, while, all unconscious of its presence, she rests in a nook of the old bridge, leans one hot temple on the cool stone parapet, and closes her tired eyes in a stillness that is half stupefaction and half sleep.

"Cressida!"

She lifts her heavy lids, and looks into Isidore St. Just's pale handsome face, unnaturally pale in the white moonlight; but it does not frighten her now.

For the moment she literally forgets the past, thinks she is waking from some hideous dream, and greets him with outstretched hands and a glad welcoming cry.

"Isidore! I have dreamed so terribly, I thought——"

There she pauses, struck to the heart with a chill sense of reality, and gazes round with wide anguished eyes.

There burn the city lights and rise the palaces of modern Paris.

There the dark river creeps beneath her feet.

There stands her husband, with eyes like steel and cruel white lips!

The merciful delusion passes forever, it is all real, all true!

"Cressida," she shrinks nearer and nearer to the parapet, farther and farther from the man who has sworn to cherish and protect her, a dumb horror in her eyes and on her parted lips. "Cressida, I have followed you all day, and tracked you down at last. You shall listen to me, shall hear reason, shall accept my father's offer!"

He has been so accustomed to subdue the docile childlike girl that he pauses mechanically for her submission now.

But there is no answer, only that dreadful dumb stare, that eloquent shrinking from his look and touch.

"Come with me, Cressida," he repeats, more gently. "All this is hard on you, terribly hard; but it is my father's will. I quarrelled with him, Cressida, two years ago; I was in debt, in trouble. I fled to England and earned my bread by teaching in a school; but the bread was dry and bitter, your England sad and dull. So, when it pleased my father to break our marriage and find me another bride, a millionaire heiress, Cressida, who will replenish my coffers but never touch my heart, what could I do but submit?"

He finishes with an uneasy laugh; but still she does not speak.

All words, weak or strong, are alike powerless to paint her pain or the infamy of his conduct.

"Cressida!" he lays one hand upon her shoulder, and the stony calm is broken. She turns upon him with a tragic scorn and passion:

"Do not speak to—do not touch me!" she rather gasps than says; but he holds her still, and says with some show of authority—

"This is nonsense, high-flown, ridiculous and dangerous! Do not struggle, Cressida; until some arrangement is made for your future you shall not wander out alone. Bah! What a child you are! Have you thought what will become of you—even where you sleep to-night?"

He puts the question half-earnestly, half in angry mockery, for the demon within him is roused by her opposition.

And she?

Only the angels who weep for human frailty and human pain, as they set down the sad and blotted records of our lives, know whether she gave it a wilful and premeditated answer.

Isidore St. Just only knows that a smile like sudden bursting through a cloud breaks over the pale tortured face—that, repeating the one word—

"Where?" with a wild triumphant thrill in her voice, she breaks from him with sudden strength—and then——

There is a shrill sharp cry, a heavy splashing sound, the waters part and close, a long rippling line of light runs down the gray bosom of the river, and Isidore St. Just stands alone on the bridge, with the big drops of a mortal terror on his brow and the agony of the first murderer in his cold and selfish heart.

An hour afterwards he stands with leaden-hued face and chattering teeth in his father's study, and tells the tragic ending of the tale.

"I never dreamed of this: I thought she would join her friends in Australia," he says, almost piteously, and Monsieur St. Just shakes his gray head.

"It is terrible, of course, but almost for the best. She would have submitted quietly. She would have joined no friends but those in Heaven, with whom she is very happy now. Did no one see you together?"

"No one," Isidore answers gloomily. "We were alone on the bridge, and I came away at once."

"Good!" Monsieur St. Just's face clears wonderfully. "Courage, my son! Providence favors us, and all will be for the best!"

CHAPTER VII.

A PRETTY morning-room on the western side of a quaint old gray-stone house, a broad verandah overgrown with climbing roses, two chairs placed vis-a-vis in the scented shadow, two ladies occupying them, and appearing exceedingly happy in each other's company.

Lady Gordon, a handsome, stately old lady, whose fine-featured, delicately-tinted face is beautiful still, despite her seventy years, sits upright in her lounging-chair, with a bit of fine embroidery in her ringed white fingers, while her companion watches her pretty arched brows of admiration and wonder.

"Why, grandmamma, you are the most wonderful old lady in the world!" she says composing herself into an attitude of boyish ease. "You are not a day older than you were two years ago, when I left you in Paris."

"Sit straight in your chair, Florence, and do not talk nonsense!" the grandmother answers, looking with affectionately disapproving eyes at the slender little figure that poises itself so audaciously on the arm of the chair, is the small shining head with short jetty curls bent eagerly forward, the little ringed hands clasped on the crossed knee, the small slippered foot, with its gleaming buckle and cardinal stocking fully displayed.

Miss Carmichael looks all black and gold and vivid carnation bloom, an audaciously dazzling creature, whom Lady Gordon's severe taste condemns while in her heart she dearly loves her.

"Well, but really, grandmamma," the girl persists, "you do seem changed somehow! Frank noticed it as well as I. You look as though you had found something."

"I have found a great new happiness," Lady Gordon says gently; and the slender fingers tremble a little over their delicate work.

"You mean Cressida! She is very beautiful, is she not, grandmamma? Her face is perfect, in line and color; but she looks so very, very sad. Is she anything like aunt Rosamond?"

"Very," replies Lady Gordon, with sudden emphasis; "so like that when I saw her first I thought——"

She pauses, a faint tinge of color rising in the fair old cheek that is almost as smooth as her grandchild's, then goes on a little absently—

"But there is one difference, Rosamond's eyes were blue, hers, as you know, are an exquisite brown, like your mother's!"

"And Frank's are like her mother's, I suppose," the girl finishes, with a little tinkling laugh that is like a peal of silver bells. "Papa is always lamenting that I did not inherit the Gordon eyes instead of his own little black ones."

The brilliant orbs she maligns sparkle anew with the words; but Lady Gordon ignores the mock-modesty, and answers with perfect tranquility—

"You would have little cause to complain Florence, if you took after your father in every respect. Sir Robert Carmichael was one of the handsomest young men I ever saw——"

"And will be the handsomest old one, as you will admit when you see him, the handsomest and dearest and best, that is to say, he was," the young lady adds, catching herself up with considerable vivacity, "now he is a tyrant! I do not think it is good for the father of a family to be made governor of a lot of wretched abject negroes. It gives such autocratic ideas."

Lady Gordon smiles as she notes the petulant pout of the red lips, the angry sparkle of the bright dark eyes.

It is rather the face of a spoiled child thwarted for the first time than that of a reckless and rebellious young woman.

But, all the same, that shrewd watcher is glad to remember how many miles of sea and land now stretch between Sir Robert Carmichael's daughter and the lover of whom Sir Robert Carmichael so strongly disapproves.

She has not seen very much of Florence, for two years she has not seen her at all: and she is but vaguely acquainted with the story that is evidently in the poor girl's mind.

All she knows is that Sir Robert Carmichael her son-in-law and the governor of an important South African province, has written to her in hot haste, telling her that Florence was fretting after a most undesirable lover, that he was sending her to England in her brother's charge, and trusted her grandmother would, for a time at least, receive her.

She has been just six weeks at Gordon Cross, as Lady Gordon's pretty flower-house is called, and in that space of time she has contrived to win her old place in the stately old lady's heart.

Her old place, but no more, as she laughingly complains; for, though the dowager is gentler and more expansive in manner than when, as a schoolgirl of sixteen, Florence parted from her in Paris, the pent-up tenderness of years is not lavished upon her.

"I declare it is not fair!" she cries, catching at a creamy rose that dangles just within her reach, and tearing its fragrant satiny leaves remorselessly to bits. "You care twice as much for cousin Cressida as you do for me, and you have not known her half as long."

Lady Gordon neither denies the imputation nor answers her grandchild's smile; she looks away from her across the sunlit lawn, as she answers gravely:

"There were no arrears of love due to you Florence. I never quarreled with your mother."

"And you did with aunt Rose!" Miss Carmichael says quickly. "Oh, grandmamma, do tell me the story: it is like a romance!"

Lady Gordon hesitates for a few seconds; then she says, with a little tremulous smile:

"Very well, child; if you can sit still so long you shall hear the story, though I do not think you will find it particularly interesting, and there is much that it pains me to tell. It is the history of a foolish love and a runaway marriage, Florence."

Lady Gordon is still looking away across the waving grass and drooping roses, self-absorbed and dreamy still, or she must have noted the startled look and vivid blush with which her granddaughter heard these words; fearing her confusion might be noticed, the latter says quickly—

"My mother and aunt Rosamond were twins, were they not?"

"No certainly, not child; are you dreaming?" Lady Gordon asks, a little scandalized by the ignorance of the family history thus displayed. "Your mother was five years older than Rosamond; Eustace came between them."

"Oh, so he did!" Florence says carelessly. "Aunt Rosamond was quite young when mother was married, then?"

"She was eighteen, and prettier than any girl I ever saw. I can see her still as she looked on her sister's wedding-day, with her golden hair, her violet eyes, and——"

"She was your favorite, then, as Cressida is now," Miss Carmichael interrupts jealously.

"She was every one's favorite, my dear; she was so gentle and loving and good; but"—Lady Gordon's lips quiver—"my favor and her virtues served her but little; for when she disobeyed me I cast her off, and never saw her again alive."

"What was her sin?" Florence asks with forced carelessness; for conscience is drawing a pretty parallel between her own story and that of her unknown aunt.

"She 'fell in love,' as she called it, with her music teacher—a young man named Leigh—a gentleman by birth, as it turned out, but of course no match for her. He had the impudence to ask me for her hand—I have never forgiven him, Florence!" the old lady cries, her eyes brightening and flashing over the angry parenthesis; "and, when I scornfully dismissed him, he persuaded my unfortunate misguided child to choose between us, and—she chose——"

"And then?"

"Then I never saw her again. I hardened my heart against her. I sent back her letters unopened, until she grew tired of sending them. Even the one I did read, which told me she was widowed, and left in the wide world with a baby girl, did not soften my inexorable purpose. Had she pleaded abject poverty, asked money from me, I should have given it; but she did not. As she spoke of boarding in a school, of providing for the baby, I concluded that she had funds at her disposal, and so I let the last chance of escaping a lifelong remorse escape me too."

"But did neither my mother nor uncle Eustace plead for their outcast sister?" Florence asks, with an indignation born of secret sympathy with the rebellious Rosamond.

"Your mother was far away and in very delicate health, and Eustace was prouder and even more bitterly indignant than I. For sixteen years we never mentioned Rosamond's name, and when we did at last break that proud silence she was a name only—remorse and forgiveness were alike in vain. Oh, I was terribly punished," the proud old woman cries with sudden passion; "for I lost both my children at once! Eustace was wounded in the lungs in a skirmish with some hill tribe in India—a mortal wound; but he came home to die. We brought him here, hoping to the last that his native air might cure him; but it was not to be, and he knew it, and took the slow death as he met with the swift bullet—with the gallant grace of a soldier. But towards the last he grew very weak, and, in the delirium that came to him at night, would call pitifully for Rosamond—'baby Rose,' as he had been wont to call her when a child. At last he called me to him, and whispered so faintly that I could hardly hear the words—

"'Mother, forgive Rosamond and little Cressida your namesake, you know, and let me see her before I die.'

"With a breaking heart I obeyed him, for his moments were numbered, and by going to town I might lose his last look and word; but even that were better than refusing his last prayer. So I went—went from the death-bed of one child to look upon the grave of another; for Rosamond had been dead for fourteen years!"

She pauses, turning her head apruptly away; and Florence says softly—

"Poor grandmamma, it was dreadful for you; but at least uncle Eustace could have seen Cressida."

A sudden shiver runs through Lady Gordon's frame, and her pale lips move stiffly as she continues—

"When I got back to Gordon Cross my pain and punishment were both complete; your uncle Eustace was dead!"

Then even Florence Carmichael, who is not a particularly sensitive young lady, questions her no more; she would like much to pursue her inquiries, for there is an aggravating discrepancy between facts as here told and facts as she knows them, that she longs to see accounted for.

"Cressida was certainly not with her when she fetched me from the convent at Paris two years ago," muses Miss Florence; "and uncle Eustace was as certainly dead. There's a year wrong somewhere, and I cannot ask her any more questions: she looks such a wretched old ghost whenever she dives into that much-troubled past of hers. I know, I'll ask Frank—Cressida and he are always knocking their heads together—I dare say she has told him her whole history!"

Just as Miss Carmichael reaches this stage in her meditations, Lady Gordon raises her head and says with restored calmness—

"Where is Cressida, I wonder? I have not seen her for some time."

"Off with Frank, of course," the girl answers, with a blithe little laugh. "They have gone for a stroll, and, if they don't get lost like the babes in the woods, will be back for tea. Cressida invited me to accompany them, but Frank looked not at all pleased at the idea: so, as the sun was hot, and I never did care for the picking of daisies, I obligingly stayed behind. Do you know, grandmother——"

Florence pauses with a malicious smile at the startled look on Lady Gordon's face.

"Do I know what, child?"

"That hearts have been lost and won since we came to Gordon Cross; that Miss Cressida Leigh may become Mrs. Francis Carmichael whenever she chooses to speak the important word? Grandmamma, what is it?"

She may well ask the question, for Lady Gordon, the tranquil, self-possessed lady whose movements as a rule are regulated by a kind of courtly clockwork, so leisurely, elegant, and easy are they, has risen now with startling abruptness, and pushed her pretty work-table so violently aside, that it has fallen to the ground, and all its silver and satin fittings are rolling down the verandah steps and out over the lawn faster than the kneeling Florence can pursue them.

"What was it startled you?" the girl asks, looking up curiously from her task. "Not my foolish joke, surely?"

"It was foolish, very foolish!" Lady Gordon repeats severely, though there comes something of relief in her look. "Do not let me hear you indulge in such ill-bred jesting again!"

Florence stares for a moment, as though she could hardly believe her ears.

Then she colors, tosses her saucy head, and walks away highly offended by the rebuke.

"Cross, unreasonable old thing!" she grumbles, as she mounts the broad stairs away to her own pretty room. "I don't wonder poor aunt Rosamond ran away; any girl of spirit would, when she found the string drawn so tightly; I do not count Cressida; she's too meek and mournful for me, though Frank seems to find that sort of thing attractive. What a rage she was in at the thought of their flirting even! Well—we shall see what we shall see; I suppose she is to arrange everyone's wedding, and love is to go for nothing at all. Ah!"

There is a significant commentary on Miss Carmichael's words and the vanity of earthly wishes, as exemplified by those with which she credits her grandmother, in the haste with which she unlocks a pretty little inlaid cabinet, whose golden key she wears suspended from her neck, and the tender care with which she draws from it a photograph and letter.

The picture she looks at with a sort of rapture, kisses vehemently; and replaces in the box; the letter she reads with heightened color and brilliantly sparkling eyes.

"My most beautiful Florence," it runs,—"they think to separate us; but their efforts are and always will be vain, while you are true to your generous promise and to the man who so madly loves you. I have followed you to England, my queen, have mocked at all the watery waste they place between us, and am here again at your feet. Do you mock for my sake at the tyranny of the brother so insolent to the man who needs must worship you while he lives, and evade the grandmother who has forgotten love and youth, and steal to the park-gate to meet and bless once more with a kind word and look—Your lover——"

Foolish, reckless Florence presses her red lips on the closing words, then sets them in the firmness of a stern resolve.

"I will meet him," she says, with sparkling eyes and wildly throbbing heart—"my king, my handsome noble lover! Let them despise him and condemn me if they will—I cannot help that—I must be true to him and to myself. They will learn perhaps, as grandmother did, how hard and cruel they have been when it is too late."

Poor Lady Gordon; if in telling the painful story of Rosamond Leigh's marriage, she has hoped to warn her grandchild from the rock of disobedience on which her daughter had been so hopelessly wrecked, she will be sadly deceived, for Florence reads the allegory it contains in quite a different fashion!

The warning is for hard-hearted and obdurate parents she thinks, not to rash and headstrong lovers.

So, fortified rather than shaken in her resolution, she steals out to meet the man of whom she knows nothing but that his face is very handsome and his voice dangerously soft and sweet.

CHAPTER VIII.

"FRANK, dear Frank, do not look at me so! Will you not believe that I never dreamed of this?"

There is no immediate answer to Cressida's pitifully earnest appeal.

The girl stands, tall and shadowy in her sweeping white dress, just as she has risen from the piano against which her companion still leans.

He is a tall dark-haired, frank-faced young man, by no means handsome, but very pleasant to look upon in a general way, though now his bronzed face looks a little hard and grim.

She is very pale, the soft white dress that hangs in statuesque folds around the slender figure is not more colorless than the lovely grieved face; but Cressida has more than fulfilled the promise of her girlhood, and even in her present distress and dismay she is undeniably beautiful.

The two years that have elapsed since that terrible night in Paris, when she passes literally through the jaws of death into a new and happier life than she had ever known, have ripened and perfected that which was fair enough before; and Miss Leigh—or Miss Leigh-Gordon as her grandmother prefers that she should be called—is the acknowledged beauty of the countryside.

But, beautiful and courted as she is, she goes very little into society.

The dark story of her past life shadows her present and her future too terribly for that, and those who admire her beauty most declare there is a frosty reserve, a chill sadness, that sets all thought of love or marriage absolutely aside, as though she were some exquisite statue—a Galatea whom no Pygmalion could warm into human love. And she is well content that it should be so; young and fair as she is, a life of passionless peace is the best she can look forward to.

To her own heart and conscience she is still a wife, though her traitor husband has grown loathsome to her, and she knows that the law declines to recognize her claim.

And she shrinks from even the semblance of flirtation, or the light gossip that might link her name with any man's, as from a dreadful sin; so it chances that, while all men admire her, not one has come so near as to speak his own love, or beg for hers.

And, if Cressida's heart is empty and cold, her conscience is at ease—or has been until to-day.

But to-day—to-day the earth has seemed to open at her feet, and, as by a lightning flash she sees the abyss upon the verge of which she is standing.

Frank Carmichael loves her—has asked her to marry him.

Oh, that she had told him all!

The horror and shame of the moment are almost more than she can bear.

And yet—is it only pain, only remorse and humiliation, that dizzy thrill, or is there a wild, wicked ecstasy, a rapture that no fear and shame can kill, that wakes the cold heart to aching life?

The doubt, the self-distrust is worse than all to pure Cressida, who is only the prouder and purer because she bears so heavy a burden of undeserved disgrace.

"Oh, no, Frank!" she cries, rising abruptly from her seat at the piano, and facing him with such horror in her startled eyes and pale face that he comes to a sudden pause in his fervent pleading. "You must not, Frank; it is wrong—wicked—indeed it cannot be!"

For a moment he looks at her with a dismay that, if he were less tragically in earnest, would be almost comic to look upon.

Surely never since the world began had declaration of love been received in such a fashion!

She might not love, she might not even like him, though Francis Carmichael, by no means a vain man, can hardly bring himself to credit this; but what can there be that is either "wrong" or "wicked" in his words?

But, as he looks at that pale exquisite face and reads the pain and distress so plainly written there, the truth underlies her wild words, that he has embarked all the hopes of his manhood in a venture that is destined to swift and cruel shipwreck.

"Is it true, Cressida?" he exclaims, catching the two cold hands within his own, and searching her pale face with hungry eyes. "Tell me at once! You are not jesting; it is all true?"

The girl's heart aches to hear how keen pain has sharpened the full, manly voice that was wont to ring out with so cheery a sound.

She drops her golden head and answers with a humility that would surprise those who call Miss Leigh-Gordon "so cold and proud."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

OLD PAPERS.—The papers which gather in a modern household was often a tribulation, always in the way when not wanted, and certain to be missing if a sheet is wanted to wrap a parcel, or you wish to refer to an article a week old. It is a good rule never to destroy a newspaper until it is a week old, but to draw for use on an old stock. Let the pile gather till some convenient time, and go over them, clipping the recipes, the interesting descriptions of foreign places, of trades and adventures, which are so large a part of the best journals. Having "picked the brains" of your papers, stow them neatly away where they can be found for lighting the fire, polishing windows, rubbing stoves, or for the rag vendor. Save all your rags and clippings, not more for your own thrift than for the good of the world, for manufacturers find it difficult to get as much paper stock as they need.

Old newspapers can be ground again with a little fresh stock for cheaper qualities of printing paper; straw and manilla can be worked into printing and wrapper paper again, but there is never enough of rags for the nice book paper which will wear well with handling and take impressions from the engraver's block. It is amusing to see the anxious air with which a publisher, who sometimes visits our house, regards every scrap of letter paper and rags which come in his way. "Don't waste it," he protests, "we never can get fine paper cheap enough. Save all your rags." So I save them for love of literature and nice books. M. S.

THE BIRD AND THE SHADOW.

BY F. W. S.

Through the blue heaven, with sunlight on its wings,
The free bird flies and sings:
Beneath upon the ground its shadow plays
In endless, shapeless maze.

O fool, who only sees the shadow blurred,
And not the bright-winged bird!
And all the years thine arrows squandered
On such inanimate quest!

Oh, lift, though it be late, thine earth-dimmed eyes
Where on the darkening skies
Still flash the white wings! If one shaft remain,
With that thou mayst attain!

A Wife's Martyrdom.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BROKEN WEDDING RING," "THORNS AND BLOSSOMS," "WHICH LOVED HIM BEST?" ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLI.

"I WILL take care of my lady," said the nurse comfortingly. "No harm will come to her when I am near her and on the alert. There is no denying, Miss Angela, that here your life is in peril. There will surely be another attempt to get rid of you, it may be by poison or fire, but it will be made if you remain here. Go away until the will is cancelled and a new one made.

"I cannot imagine even now how my lady could have been persuaded to do such a thing; but the Captain had great influence over her in those days. It will be the best plan for you, Miss Angela, to go from here for a time, and not to let any one know where you are."

"But mamma would be frightened, Jane."

"I will see to that, my dear. She will not be so frightened as she would be if she heard that you had met with another dangerous accident. At least you would be safe."

"Where could I go? I have plenty of acquaintances, but few friends. I have not one to whom I could go with what sounds so like an improbable story. To whom could I say that my mother's husband had a design on my life, and that I was in mortal peril?

"No one would believe me. The Captain is a popular man; he is much liked and admired; and, were I to make such a charge, people would only laugh at me, and say that I had gone mad."

"Some one would believe you, my dear. The wickedness of the world is pretty well known. I could tell you a stranger story than yours, for I have lived long, and have seen much.

"But the point to be kept in view at present is how to defeat Captain Wynyard. I will weigh the matter, for it is very plain that you and my lady are no more able to cope with him than children."

"I am afraid not," allowed Angela very sadly.

"I must go now," said Mrs. Felspar. "I have something to do for my lady, and she will not be pleased if I neglect it. Between now and to-morrow, my dear, I will think of some plan that will help you out of your difficulty. So on that point you can set your heart at rest."

But, with the fear of a sudden and terrible death hanging over her, with the miserable certainty that crime and wickedness shadowed her happy home, Angela did not find it very easy to rest.

* * * * * *

"Miss Angela, will you come out into the house-garden?" said Mrs. Felspar. "I am afraid to speak to you here; the walls have ears."

"I will be with you in five minutes, Jane," replied Miss Roeden; and in five minutes she and the old nurse stood face to face in the garden.

"I have thought of a plan which is perfectly safe, miss, if you will only carry it out."

"I will do so, Jane," she replied, "for every hour that passes brings me greater anxiety."

"I have a cousin named Mary Bowen who has been for more than thirty years housekeeper at Brantome Hall. It is a beautiful place situated on the Kentish coast, and just now the family are away, and she has the whole Hall to herself."

"Who are the family?" asked Angela quickly.

"The Arleighs. The late Earl died some time since, but the Countess is living. She has two children, the young Earl and daughter, Lady Maud Arleigh. They are all away in Italy now. They left home more than a year ago, and are not expected back until next year. My cousin is left in entire charge of the Hall; and you could find no safer hiding-place than that."

"You are very kind to suggest such a thing, Jane. It seems an excellent plan," said Angela. "Will your cousin consent to receive me?"

"Yes, miss, and be pleased. I should advise you however to take another name, so that there may be no possibility of tracing you."

"I shall not like it, but I will do it," she said. "Oh, Jane, to think that I should have to steal away from my home and assume another name! I will take my dear father's name, and pass as 'Miss Charles.' But what will your dear cousin say or think?"

"I shall not tell her who you are, miss. That would never do; it would not be safe. You are hiding because your life is in danger, and we must take every precaution to keep your whereabouts a secret. I will write to my cousin to-day, and tell her that a very dear friend of mine—a Miss Charles—wants a home for a few weeks, and that I should be most grateful if she could receive her as a visitor just for a short time, while the family are away.

"She will not only be willing, but pleased to do it. Lady Arleigh allows her to have friends to stay with her, and she will be glad of your company. She need never know who you are, or anything at all about you.

"You can stay there for a few weeks as Miss Charles, you can leave the Hall as Miss Charles, and no one except ourselves need ever know the truth of the story. My cousin has her own rooms, and she will see that you are properly accommodated.

"I shall tell her that you have not been well, and that you want complete solitude and rest, and that the greatest kindness she can show you will be to keep every one from you."

"Oh, Jane," said the girl, "I am greatly indebted to you! But it is a terrible thing to be passing under a false name."

"It is a terrible thing also to meet with dangerous accidents," promptly retorted Jane; "and, unless you go, you know, you will meet with another."

Then she added, "Excuse me, miss, but have you any money?"

"Yes; I have more than a hundred pounds by me."

"That is well. Money is a good friend," observed Mrs. Felspar sagely. "I shall write to-day, miss, and I shall get an answer by return of post. It will be four days at least before you can go. Oh, be careful, Miss Angela! So much can happen in four days! Keep away from the Captain as much as possible, and do not do a single thing that he tells you or wishes you to do."

"How can I reconcile myself to leave my mother, Jane?"

"By remembering that you are trying to save her life as well as your own. If you die, she dies; there is no mistake about it. Your leaving here is a question of life or death."

"I know it," said Angela sadly. "Oh, Jane, can we mistaken, do you think? Have we judged Captain Wynyard too hardly? Have we been too suspicious?"

"Go over the ground again, my dear, and your own reason will give you a satisfactory answer," replied Mrs. Felspar. "You will not like traveling alone, miss," observed the old nurse, "but I do not see how it can be avoided."

"That is a minor trouble, Jane," said Miss Roeden. "My best plan will be to go to London first. The Captain may trace me as far as there; but he will not be able to trace me from there. I shall then be able to manage very well. I must go to the railway-station at Hetfield and take a ticket for London, and then make my way to London Bridge Station. Where must I look for then?"

"You must take a ticket for Culdale," replied Mrs. Felspar. "I have been twice to see my cousin, so that I know the route well. Brantome Hall is about two miles from the station, and the road is quite straight and pleasant walking."

"I shall remember," said Angela.

"And, my dear," continued the faithful old servant, "it will be better that we should not be seen talking together after this; then no one will think that there has been any communication between us, and there will be no possible traces as to where you have gone.

"If the Captain saw me talking to you, he might, when he finds out what has happened suspect me, and then it would be easy enough to connect my cousin with your absence. We will keep apart, miss."

"But how shall I know, nurse, whether your plan can be carried out? It will be wiser not to be seen together, I admit; but how will you let me know as to the final arrangements?"

Jane Felspar thought for a few minutes, and then she said—

"I must give you a silent message, miss. This is Tuesday morning. My cousin will receive my letter on Wednesday, and her answer will reach me on Thursday morning. Miss Angela, have everything in readiness, for, if on Thursday night you find on your toilet-table a vase filled with violets, that will be my message, and it will mean that early on Friday morning, before the household here are awake or astir, you are to go to Brantome Hall.

"Leave a letter for my lady, telling her that you have an imperative reason which you cannot disclose for leaving home for some weeks; write that letter, so that my lady can show it to the Captain. Then write another letter and place it inside; mark it 'Private,' so that my lady know it is for her eyes alone, and in that letter tell her that you will return home when the will she made is cancelled, but that you will not return until then."

"A very wise suggestion," declared Angela. "How clever you are, to think of such things! They would never have occurred to me."

"That is the difference between youth and age, Miss Angela. Besides, I have seen much of life, and you have been taken care of like a cherished flower: the rougher ways of the world are quite unknown to you."

"The world will never be the same place and life will never be the same thing to me again, Jane," the girl remarked, after a pause. "I feel so many years older than I did; I shall never be a girl again."

"You will forget your trouble in time, and you will forget it all the sooner for being away from here. You will remember the sign, Miss Angela? If you find a glass filled with violets on your toilet-table on Thursday night, you will know that the road has been made straight for you, and that early on Friday morning you leave here for Brantome.

"I shall pack your clothes to-morrow, and send them away in two old boxes of my own. I will get James Carter to take them to the station, and they shall be addressed to 'Miss Charles.' No," said the nurse, checking herself suddenly, "that will not do. You must take a few things with you, and I will manage to send the boxes straight on to my cousin.

"I know how I can do it without exciting any suspicion, but I must wait until the first hue-and-cry is over. Oh, Miss Angela," concluded the old woman, "if I could but go with you! I am afraid, after all, that you will be lonely and miserable."

"I shall be continually thinking of mamma," said the girl drearily. "Oh, Jane, how strange it seems that such a cruel fate should have overtaken me!"

Long after Jane Felspar had left her Angela stood mentally reviewing the unhappy circumstances amid which she was placed.

It seemed to her as though she were passing through some hideous dream, as though she had left far behind her all the brightness of her girlhood, as though all that was fairest and best in life had entirely forsaken her.

Again came moments when she could not realize the truth, when all that she had undergone and dreaded, seemed to be the offspring of a disordered fancy, when she decided that she must have imagined these things, that she had allowed doubts and suspicions to warp her mind.

Could she be mistaken?

The Captain certainly was a gentleman, a man of good birth, and most popular in society.

True, he had committed what she considered a crime in marrying her mother solely for her money's sake; he had committed even a greater crime in making her mother unhappy after her marriage.

But between those two evil deeds and this darker, more hideous one there was a gulf so great that even in her imagination she could not bridge it over.

He lived under the same roof with her; they met two or three times daily; he was polite and kind to her in a formal manner; and yet he was very cunningly and cruelly devising means whereby he could take her life!

It seemed impossible to believe it; nevertheless everything pointed in confirmation of her fears.

CHAPTER XLII.

ACTING on Jane Felspar's advice, Angela was most cautious in her conduct and speech. On Wednesday morning Captain Wynyard came to her, remarking—

"It is a lovely morning, Angela; you should go out."

"I am going to sit with mamma," she returned. "If I can persuade her to go out, I shall go with her."

"The air is very fresh and invigorating," he continued, "and will do you much good."

He was moving uneasily from one place to another, a restless look in his eyes, a livid line round his mouth, an expression of craft and cruelty on his face that robbed it of all beauty.

"Walking is of no use," he went on. "You should try the new mare that I bought for you. I hear wonders of her from the groom—she is a grand hack, has a good mouth, and with absolutely no tricks. You have not tried her yet."

"No," she returned very quietly, "I have not."

She remembered Jane Felspar's warning, "Do not go out with him;" and she wondered within herself, if she tried the new mare as he wished her, how soon an accident would happen, and what form it would take.

That one would occur she felt quite certain.

"Then," he urged, "if you do not care to try the mare, take the pony-carriage. The ponies want exercising."

"They might prove too fresh," she remarked; and, as she spoke, she raised her eyes to his face, and regarded him steadfastly for a moment.

She saw how the livid tint spread, how he winced at her words.

"You need have no fear, a good whip like you," he assured her.

"I have no fear, Captain," she replied; "but I do not feel inclined either to ride or to drive this morning. I shall walk with mamma."

Captain Wynyard went away, but not before Angela had noticed the expression of baffled rage that swept over his countenance.

She knew just as though she had been told that he had planned something to injure her, and she shuddered as she thought of it.

If she had known that on this same morning he had received a note from Gladys Rose telling him how dreary and monotonous life was without him, and asking him to say when he thought it probable that they might meet, she would perhaps have been able to trace some connection between it and his renewed interest in her health.

She could no longer take refuge from her harassing thoughts in the hope that she was mistaken, and, even had she had any doubt a discovery made later on would have finally convinced her.

Yet, with the ample proof that she had, she felt sure that, were she to seek advice or help, she would be laughed at; the whole story seemed even to herself so incredible and horrible.

Angela was passing the library windows, which looked on to the terrace, at an hour when she was generally with her mother.

On reaching the middle window, she halted, and out of mere curiosity looked in.

She saw the Captain standing inside, with his back to the windows and his face to the great mirror over the low mantelpiece; and as the mirror was exactly opposite to the window, she could see the reflection very plainly.

He held two small bottles in his hands, and was dropping some perfectly colorless fluid from one into the other, evidently counting the drops as they fell.

He was so engrossed in his task that he did not hear the approach of the watcher, nor did he raise his eyes to the mirror.

Had he done so, he must have seen the reflection of the coldest face so intently watching his movements.

Drop after drop was slowly and cautiously measured, yet the hands that held the phials did not tremble.

One drop fell upon the side of the lowermost bottle, and she saw how carefully he removed it.

Then he began slowly again, and the drops trickled slowly from one phial to the other.

All at once the idea flashed through her mind that what he had in the bottles was intended for her.

She could not avoid the suspicious thought; she could not help the quick impulsive action that followed.

She opened the long glass-door and walked quickly up to his side.

"What are you doing?" she asked abruptly.

She never forgot the terror her sudden appearance caused him.

"Great Heaven!" he cried involuntarily.

He started back, fear and horror in his white face, and in his agitation bottles fell to the ground.

The next moment the room was filled with a faint odor of peaches.

He gave one swift glance at her and one at the fragments; then he made a desperate attempt to recover himself.

"How you startled me!" he exclaimed.

"I am sorry," she said coldly. "I did not mean to startle you. I have been at the window some few minutes, and I wonder you did not see me. How carefully you were measuring that fluid. What was it?"

Angela was not slow to notice the abject terror that came into his eyes; but it lasted only for a moment.

"I have suffered dreadfully from the toothache lately," he explained; "and this was something I had procured for it. I was obliged to measure it carefully; the druggist tells me that it is a poison."

"And meant for me," thought the girl, "as surely as I live!"

"You really startled me," the Captain went on. The color was returning slowly to his lips and face. "And now see—I have lost my precious drops!"

"You can get more where those came from," she told him; and he looked with eager piercing eyes into her face.

Nothing was to be learned there; it was quite calm and inscrutable.

It was impossible that she should have even the faintest suspicion. Why or how should she?

"I thought my nerves were stronger," he said laughingly.

Angela was looking at the fragments of glass on the ground.

"What a strange odor!" she remarked. "It is exactly like that of peaches."

"Peaches!" he repeated. "Oh, no, not at all! It's rather like musk, if anything. I will ring the bell and have the glass taken away."

When the servant answered the summons, he said—

"I have had an accident, and have broken two small bottles and spilled some medicine. See that it is all cleared up."

He was not quite himself as he spoke, and his eyes moved restlessly from the servant to Angela.

He would not leave the library until the fragments of glass had been removed and the carpet well cleansed.

Even when that was done a faint odor as of peaches lingered in the room. He went to his dressing-room, and procured a bottle of strong perfume, which he sprinkled on the carpet, and gradually that overpowered the peach-odor then he seemed content.

All that day Angela was debating in her mind—was she right or wrong in her suspicions of the Captain?

If they were well founded, in what deadly danger she stood.

Her thoughts traveled back over every detail of the meeting in the library—his abject terror, his involuntary exclamation, his plausible statement, and the evident anxiety he had displayed that no trace of what was spilt should remain on the library carpet.

The accident was full of suspicion, and she could not help the feeling that in some way or other she had had a narrow escape.

On Thursday evening she found on her toilet-table the "silent message"—a glass filled with fresh violets—and she knew, as Jane Felspar had expressed it, that the way lay straight before her, that early the next morning she must leave the dear old home, which was no longer a place of safety for her.

She resolved to spend the few remaining hours with her mother; and, on repairing to her room, she found the unhappy lady weeping most bitterly.

She would not tell Angela why, except there had been some little unpleasantness with the Captain.

"It is useless to trouble you, Angel," sobbed Lady Laura. "If I could, I would fain keep my sorrow to myself."

"I am sure you have been speaking to him of Gladys Rane, mamma," declared Angela; "nothing else ever causes you such grief as this."

"Never mind, Angel. I repent most bitterly of the step I took. Oh, my darling, if I had but listened to you! My life is one long martyrdom. Angel, I have never confessed it before; but, oh, how I long to be free! I am tired of suffering, and the time has come when I desire to be free, to be away from him, to cease to suffer at his hands. I want to be where every day will not bring me fresh torture. I long for peace and rest!"

With kindly words Angela soothed her unhappy mother.

"The time for rest will come," she said. "All sorrows end, mamma, just as all darkness ends, and the dawn comes at last."

"Alas, for me, Angel, the dawn will never come!" sighed Lady Laura. "It is my whole life that is wrecked. I have loved him so dearly—nay, I love him still; yet he tortures me so terribly that I long to be free."

"Mamma," said Angela, "you will keep your promise to me—you will send for Mr. Sansome as soon as you can, and have that unfortunate will cancelled?"

"I will; I shall not forget. I am anxious to do it. If he had been kind to me, there would have been some justice in your father's money coming to him; but, as he has been most cruel, ruined my life and broken my heart, it does not seem just."

"It is not just, mamma. Promise me that you will not trust to letters; but that on the first day you find yourself free you will send for Mr. Sansome, and tell him you want that will destroyed."

"The Captain would be very angry if he knew," sighed Lady Laura.

"He need not know, mamma darling. He persuaded you in an underhand manner and wished you to keep the matter secret; you too can have your secret. The money is yours to do with as you will."

"I wish we had never had any money, Angel!" sighed her ladyship.

"So do I, mamma."

And mother and child, both so helpless and troubled, kissed each other.

CHAPTER XLIII.

FRIDAY morning broke calm and beautiful.

April was drawing to a close; there was a faint gleam of gold from the laburnum, a faint glimmer of purple from the lilac, and the hedges gave promise of a profusion of fragrant May.

Captain Wynyard came down early, and seemed very impatient for the arrival of the letter-bag.

His face was sullen, his eyes were troubled, and at times he was so engrossed in his own thoughts that he saw or heard nothing of what was passing around him. He looked miserable.

It happened that no visitors were staying just then in the house, and the Captain had to breakfast alone, which annoyed him, for he abhorred solitude, his thoughts, when he was by himself, being not at all pleasant ones.

Lady Laura never came down to breakfast unless the visitors required her presence.

"Where is Miss Rooden?" the Captain asked angrily.

"Miss Rooden is still in her room," was the answer.

The Captain seated himself at the table; dark thoughts darkened his face, even as they shadowed his soul.

They were cruel, terrible thoughts that could not be put into words, and were all of Angela.

When he had finished his breakfast, he opened the post-bag, which had meanwhile arrived, and took out his letters and papers; and the reading of them whiled away an hour.

Just as he was going round to the stables to decide what horses should be taken out, he heard very quick footsteps approaching.

The next moment the door was opened hastily, and Lady Laura entered the room, pale, frightened, with tears in her eyes, and her hands trembling so that she could hardly hold the letter she carried.

"Now what is the matter?" he said to himself. "There is going to be a scene."

But Lady Laura was not hysterical. A great sorrow had fallen upon her, which in its very magnitude seemed to swallow up her own.

She was hastening to him, when she paused suddenly and wrung her hands with a gesture of despair.

"I was running to you in my trouble," she cried; "but why should I? You care for neither my troubles nor my joys. You do not love me; I am less than nothing to you."

"Are you in trouble, Laura?" he asked. "What is the matter? Keep clear of sentiment and reproach, and tell me."

"Angela has gone!" moaned Lady Laura.

"Angela has what?" cried the Captain.

"She has gone! I know not why—I know not where. I only know that she has gone."

"Gone!" repeated the Captain. "It is impossible!"

Had a thunderbolt fallen at his feet, Captain Wynyard could not have been more astonished; and, had his wife been more shrewd and keen, she must have discerned guilt in his face and manner.

His face grew livid, and the lines deepened on it.

"Gone?" he questioned, in a hoarse voice. "This must be some stupid jest, Laura. What does it mean?"

"Read that," cried her ladyship, placing an open letter in his hands.

The contents ran:

"MY DARLING MAMMA—Only Heaven knows how full my heart is of desperate, bitter pain as I write this to you. I am going away from home for a time; I cannot tell you why or whither. I have a very strong and urgent reason for the step I am taking, but it is one I cannot explain to you. Do not grieve for me; I shall be safe and well. I shall be happy in every respect, except in leaving you. It will seem to you that I am acting strangely, but I have no other resource.

"Beloved mamma, believe me, I shall be well taken care of—I shall be under safe shelter; but all the time I am absent my thoughts, my heart, and my love will be with you. Mamma, when you know why I left home you will understand, and say that I acted wisely. You must forgive me, darling, because I do not say more at present. You will trust me because I have never kept one thought from you and I grieve with my whole heart that I cannot tell you the whole truth now. Good-bye, mamma, my darling! My heart will be with you until I see your dear face again. I said good-bye to you in my heart last night when I kissed you. I say it again, praying Heaven it may not be long before I return to you."

The Captain's face grew even more ghastly as he read the letter. He laid it down on the table, and, looking at his wife, asked—

"What does it mean?"

"I do not know," she answered. "That is what I have come to ask you. What does it mean? Where is my daughter gone? Have you quarrelled with her? Have you grieved or struck her? I hope Heaven will pardon me if I misjudge you, Vance; but I feel sure that you have something to do with her going away."

"You were never more mistaken in your life," he cried angrily. "I know no more about the cause of her departure than you do. I have heard nothing to lead me to suspect that she contemplated such a thing; and you cannot be more surprised than I am, or more astonished. What in the world has she done it for? What does it mean? Laura," he concluded, "you must know something about it."

"I do not indeed," she declared emphatically; "that is the reason I sought you. I thought you must know. I feared that that there had been some words, some misunderstanding, between you."

"And I know less about it than yourself! It is incredible to me that a girl of her age, who has been all her life under guardianship, should dare to leave home alone. Whither can she have gone? She knows no one. I am completely puzzled."

"The one great mystery to me is why she went, what drove her away from home."

She looked at the Captain as she uttered the words "what drove her away from home."

She noted his livid face, the great fear in his eyes, the trembling of his hands.

"Vance," she cried suddenly, "you are in a state of fear!"

"How ridiculous, Laura!" he returned quickly. "But I confess I am startled. I never dreamed of such a thing happening. She has surely not gone alone?"

"She has indeed," and her ladyship, the conviction growing upon her that her husband was in some way to blame for the occurrence.

After a brief pause, the Captain began to rally.

A faint show of color crept into his lips and cheeks; the deadly terror had passed.

He had had time to ask himself whether Angela had gone in consequence of something she had discovered concerning him.

He decided that it could not be so, for in that case she would have left some written record against him.

"There is one thing quite certain," he said at last. "She has acted foolishly, absurdly, and ridiculously. If there was anything unpleasant, why did she not complain to you or to me? Why has she gone amongst strangers? You have pleased yourself in the matter of training her. I can only say that, if she were my daughter, I would make her come back, and confine her to her room with bread and water for a week."

"Please do not speak of Angela in that manner," said her ladyship. "She is quite different from other girls. If she has fled deliberately and of her own free will, she has had some very strong reason for it. That is quite clear to my mind. If she were wild, light of thought, given to flirtation, I might waver in my opinion. But she is not frivolous; she is full of sweet wisdom and gravity. You know that."

"I should not have thought running away from home was a course Miss Rooden would take," he admitted. "But there is no accounting for surprises of this description. Has she left no address, no clue whatever? Is there no means by which she can be traced?"

"None whatever," answered Lady Laura, sadly.

"Because, if there is," he said, "I will soon find her."

"There is no clue whatever."

"You do not know why she left home, whither she has gone, how long she will remain away, or when she will return?" he asked.

Lady Laura was quite within the bounds of truth when she answered—

"No."

"Then I do not see how anything can be done," he declared. "For her own sake it will be advisable to keep this absurd freak of hers as quiet as possible. It will never do for it to be known in society that this has happened. Do the servants know, Laura?"

"Only the two maids Doris and Jane. I told them to be silent until I had seen you."

"You feel sure they have said nothing?" he asked anxiously.

"I am quite sure," replied Lady Laura. "They are both most trustworthy; they will never say one word about it. But," she added, looking up helplessly at him, "what must I do?"

The Captain thought for a while, and then answered—

"Leave the matter to me. I will do the best I can. I shall say in an off-hand manner before the servants that Miss Rooden has gone on a visit, and that she need not be expected back here, as she will meet us in town. It is an extraordinary freak; but no one can account for a girl's actions."

The Captain was not very sympathetic—nor did Lady Laura expect sympathy; but he was not unkind; and she left him, wondering whether this great sorrow which was so terrible to her would soften his heart.

"What can it mean?" she cried to herself in the seclusion of her own room. "It is all so mysterious to me."

"What can it mean?" exclaimed the Captain, as he paced up and down the library. "Great Heaven, what can it mean?"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

AN EDUCATED CRAB.—A number of the passengers on a river boat recently witnessed an interesting and curious exhibition. A man, having every appearance of being a sailor, stood on the lower forward deck beside a large pail, which was filled with sea water. In this pail was a crab of enormous size, and, to judge by the bunches of barnacles on his back, of considerable age. The sailor was a genial fellow, and appeared to be proud of his pet. He first informed the surrounding passengers that the crab was the humble possessor of the name of "Ned," and that, in addition to owning a name, he would answer to that name. This was received with incredulous smiles on the part of the onlookers.

The crab could be observed lying motionless at the bottom of the pail, as apparently contented with his position as though he was delving in the mud at the bottom of the bay. The sailor kneeled beside the pail and gave a subdued whistle, and then muttered "Ned, Ned," twice. Instantly there was a commotion in the water, as the crab wriggled its joints and bobbed round like a spider impaled on the point of a needle.

This motion was kept up until it succeeded in getting two claws over the edge of the pail. It then tried to draw itself up. The sailor suddenly ceased whistling, whereupon "Ned" dropped into his motionless attitude, only to rouse up again upon a repetition of the whistle and the calling of his name.

At last he got a grip upon the pail with one of his claws, and drew himself up almost clear of the water. His master came to his relief and laid him out upon the deck. Here he strutted round in his awkward fashion, to the infinite amusement of every one. He was apparently delighted, and when his master stretched out a hand to him he stroked it with his claws, and even pretended to "nip" it as kittens "play bite," but it was noticeable that he did not close on it.

When any of the passengers approached, it appeared sensible of the difference between them and his master, and drawing up his extremities lay sullenly in one place. Upon being asked whether "Ned" could do any more wonderful things, the sailor replied that he could. He dropped "Ned" into his pail to his crabship's satisfaction.

Then the pleased owner drew from his pocket a piece of thin rope. This he stretched between two of the deck posts about three feet from the deck. The crowd of spectators pressed round, eager to see what was the next action on the programme.

The sailor plucked "Ned" out of his natural element once more and hung him to the rope; his crabship clutched the line tightly with one of his nippers. His master then commenced a low monotonous whistle, and "Ned" put himself in motion. He evidently knew just what was expected of him, and stretching out his spare nipper he got hold of the rope a space along. Then, wriggling his claws, he released his first hold, and caught the rope again close to his second "nipper."

In this fashion he worked himself along to about the middle of the rope, when he stopped. His master held his hands beneath him, and he dropped into them exhausted. Ned's achievement was hailed with delight by the passengers, and many ladies pressed forward to look at him as he lay in the bottom of his pail.

AN Indianapolis inventor has patented a wood stove that, he claims, devotes twelve hours to converting the wood into charcoal, and twelve hours more in consuming the charcoal, as well as its own ashes. Further, that when the stove is hot the pipe at the chimney is quite cold.

Scientific and Useful.

CRACKS IN FLOORS.—Cracks in floors, around the skirting-board or other parts of a room, may be neatly and permanently filled by thoroughly soaking newspapers in paste made of one pound of flour, three quarts of water, and a tablespoonful of alum, thoroughly boiled and mixed. The mixture will be about as thick as putty, and may be forced into the cracks with a case-knife. It will harden like papier-mache.

THE HEART.—A French physician announces that distressing or excessive palpitation of the heart can always be arrested by bending double, the head down and the hands hanging, so as to produce a temporary congestion of the upper portion of the body. In nearly every instance of nervous or anæmic palpitation the heart immediately resumes its natural function. If the movements of respiration are arrested during this action, the effect is still more rapid.

PIGEONS.—Homing pigeons can be made valuable in a rural medical practice, as has been shown by an English doctor, who starts upon his daily rounds with a basket of the birds. Upon leaving the house of a patient who needed immediate attention, he would start off a pigeon with the required prescription, and the assistant in the doctor's surgery would forward the medicine to the patient long before the doctor's arrival home. A case is lately cited in which pigeons regularly carried a morning newspaper to their owner.

ETCHING ON GLASS.—A German scientist has given the composition of an ink which can be used with an ordinary pen for etching on glass. It consists of hydrochloric acid, ammonium fluoride and oxalic acid thickened with barium sulphate. He has also proposed a better substitute made in this way: Equal parts of the double hydrogen ammonia fluoride and dried precipitated barium sulphate are ground together in a porcelain mortar. The mixture is then treated in a platinum, lead or gutta-percha dish with fuming hydrofluoric acid until the acid ceases to react.

INVISIBLE.—An "invisible boat," as he styles it, is used by a South Bend, Ind., man for duck shooting. He has constructed it by cutting down an ordinary boat to the water line for one-third of her length. The remainder is made water-tight, and in the stern a mirror (28 inches high and 48 inches long) is placed so that the glass reflects the water in front and the decoys. Behind the mirror the hunter sits and paddles his boat toward the ducks, making his observations through a small spot in the mirror, from which the amalgam has been removed. As the boat moves up to the ducks they can see their own reflections in the mirror, and in some instances swim toward the boat. When the hunter is near enough to shoot he drops the mirror forward by loosening a string and gets two effective shots—one at the ducks on the water and one as they rise.

Farm and Garden.

WORTH WHILE.—It will be profitable to keep a fine, flexible wire, twine, cord, tacks, brads, different-sized nails, screws, etc., for the purpose of immediately repairs. The lack of five cents worth of material has often caused a dollar's expense.

VARIETY.—Variety conduces to health. An animal is no more fitted for subsisting on a single article of food than man. When kept upon one kind only it soon begins to reject it, eating only when compelled by hunger. Digestion is best effected when all the demands for food are complied with. The greater the variety the more rapid the progress of the animal.

PAINT.—The smell of paint may be taken away by closing up the room and setting in the centre of it a pan of lighted charcoal on which have been thrown some juniper berries. Leave this in the room for a day and night, when the smell of paint will be gone. Some persons prefer a pail of water in which a handful of hay is soaking. This is also effectual in removing the odor of tobacco smoke from a room.

THE ORCHARD.—If manure is to be used in the orchard it should never be fresh, or such as will quickly ferment. That which has been thoroughly composted, or well decomposed, is best. Some have found wood mold, mixed with lime and ashes, to be excellent, and the general opinion is that the better the manure in fineness of condition and freedom from decomposing matter the less liability of the trees to disease.

ENSILAGE.—It is stated that French farmers have succeeded in preserving ensilage for green soiling in the open air. It consists of stacking exclusively green fodder on a bed of rough stones, on a dry place, and covering the mass with a weight of a ton or a ton and a half to the yard. In silos, it will be remembered the outer crust, of varying thickness, is unfit for food. In this open-air system this crust is much thicker.

GUINEA FOWLS.—The guinea fowl is a great forager, and destroys many insects that the hens will not touch. They do not scratch the garden, and, though not easily kept near the house, they make known the places in which they lay by a peculiar noise which enables one accustomed to them to secure all the eggs they lay. They really cost nothing to raise, and when roosting near the house create an alarm should intruders make their appearance.

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In the Cause of Truth.

It is a weakness of most people in this world to speak too carelessly and flippantly upon nearly all subjects, no matter what their nature. It matters not what is the subject under discussion; if they pronounce judgment or assert facts on points upon which they are not thoroughly well-informed, they violate truth, however much they may think they honor it.

A habit of accurate observation is no less needed for perfect truthfulness. Few people know how to look or how to listen. The eye and the ear need training to distinguish what may be seen, and to appreciate what may be heard. The attention needs to be aroused and fixed, the power of concentration needs to be exercised, the flagging interest needs to be stimulated, in order that even tolerably correct impressions should be made upon the brain.

The lack of this is patent among us. How many, after looking upon a landscape or a picture, or even upon an exciting tragedy, can form any adequate representation of it in their own minds? Or, on listening to a simple story which has affected them, or a conversation which has interested them, or an eloquent speech which has thrilled them, how many can recall its main features in exact order, as to enable them to give a fair and impartial portrayal of it to others?

Yet this must be done, if they would truthfully repeat anything they have heard. Necessarily such accounts at the best can be only partial and limited, as are their powers; but if those powers are not exerted, or are only put forth in a loose and laxguid manner, they cannot hope that even that partial account shall be worthy of credence.

Then, too, there is a host of prejudices or preconceived opinions, of hopes and wishes, that hide the truth, unless men are on the alert to tear away the veil. They see and hear the things they like best, or those they wish to be true, while the rest are easily ignored or forgotten.

Thus things become colored and distorted, and of course retain that untrue form and color in the recital. It is very hard, though not impossible, to become aware of this danger, and to guard against it by extreme watchfulness and self-constraint. Even when men are sure of their facts and well-grounded in their reasons, or clear in their thoughts, or correct in their perceptions, or impartial in their investigations, in order to convey their meaning intelligently or accurately, they must have a familiarity with the signification and use of words. Who has not been often conscious of failure in expressing what he wished, though having used his utmost efforts to do so? Or who has not at times been thrilled anew by hearing or reading his own thoughts in language far more expressive and accurate than he has ever been able to command? We call truth sacred, yet the study and correct use of language, by which alone we can communicate it, is too often regarded as a strictly literary accomplishment, having nothing to do with character or morality.

Is it not certain that if our young people were imbued with larger and higher ideas of truth, and taught the moral duty of cultivating the only means we have of uttering it, a new impetus would be given to their efforts, and they would help to build up a more truth telling as well as truth-loving nation

It may be suggested that if all this care, and pains, and education, are necessary in order to tell the truth, we should be practically reduced to silence. Not so, however. There would probably be less talking done for a long time if these necessities were appreciated.

Silence is, indeed, often the best, and sometimes the only, medium of truth. But we should always recognize what is frequently forgotten or denied, that as in everything else, so in truth, there are degrees. There is no sharp limit, as some aver, between what is true and what is untrue.

Ruskin, alluding to children, says: "Make them try always who shall speak truest, both as regards the fact he has to relate and the precision of the words he expresses it in, thus making truth the test of perfect language."

Truth, like Justice, mercy and love, is infinite, and can never be exhausted. The finite man only approach it humbly, yet earnestly, and if he do this to the extent of his powers he will become a truthful and honorable man.

If, however, he does not bring all his powers into this service, if he neglects to train his faculties of observation, of thought, of language, if he does not resist the bias of prejudice and of desire, if he does not search for truth with energy, and use scrupulous care and accurate language in conveying it, he can never attain to that character.

A FAMOUS Boston preacher says: "There is an objection often urged against the higher reflective faculties in their exercise for common objects—that they give theoretical rules which are not practical. Thus, if one not actively engaged in teaching suggests any new view intended to improve the processes of education, he is apt to be told that this is not 'practical.' It is sometimes even assumed that theory and practice are opposite to each other. We often hear it asserted that a notion may be 'true in theory, but false in practice;' that is, useless for practical purposes. I, for one, esteem practice. I trace all real knowledge to experience. I care for no theories, no systems, no generalization, which do not spring from life and return to it again. I feel, perhaps, undue contempt for the vague abstractions we often listen to, idle figments of an idle brain, speculations with no basis of sharp observation beneath them. Yet we are in danger of going too far in this direction, and of undervaluing theory in its proper limits. People often eulogize practice when they only mean routine; boasting themselves as practical teachers, intending thereby that they only do what always has been done, and do not mean to do any better to-morrow than they did yesterday."

ALL real progress is slow. Sudden jerks give a backward impetus, and but little eventual gain. The lessons learned in youth, and seemingly forgotten, bear fruit in maturity. The struggles to do right that seem so hard, and so often ineffective, are steadily leading to the state where right-doing is a pleasure. The efforts we make for any worthy object may not seem successful to-day or to-morrow, but they are a part of the grand work that is going on slowly but surely, and no one of them can we afford to lose.

IN the intercourse of social life it is by little acts of watchful kindness, recurring daily and hourly—and opportunities of doing kindnesses, if sought for, are for ever starting up—it is by words, by tones, by gestures, by looks, that affection is won and preserved. Remember that the qualities of the heart stamp the features with an ineffaceable mark, either with good or bad, and cultivate those affections and habits which will write upon the tablets of your countenance that which no one reading can but love and admire.

OF all the various debts which we owe to our fellow-men, that of silence is the one most frequently disregarded. There are men who pry into the secret thoughts of their neighbors, probe their feelings, and show by wordy curiosity how little they respect rightful privacy. This is often mistaken for good-will and sympathy; but it is far enough from that delicate sympathy which, while ever glad to give help or comfort by word or deed, yet shrinks from "rushing in where angels fear to tread."

PERSONALITIES are the bane of familiar discourse. If conversation must turn upon idle report, and talk degenerate into idle tattle, rather than submit to this drying-up process of the brain, let us set a seal upon the lips. On the other hand, the exercise of civility costs one nothing. It calls for no sacrifice of time, money or interest. There is nothing to consume or fatigue one in this delightful exercise. It is the spontaneous flow of good affections, and consists in those little offices of kindness which can be discharged without trouble, and leave no loss or inconvenience behind them.

THAT house will be kept in turmoil where there is no toleration of each other's errors. If you lay a single stick of wood on the grate and apply the fire to it, it will go out; put on another stick, and they will burn; add half a dozen sticks and you will have a blaze. If one member of the family gets into a passion and is let alone, he will cool down, and may possibly be ashamed and repent. But oppose temper to temper, pile on all the fuel, draw in another of the group, and let one harsh answer be followed by others, and there will soon be a blaze that will enwrap them all.

LIFE must be regarded in the light of all that is to grow out of it. Seeds are planted here, foundations are laid, perhaps only ground is cleared. There is eternity to work on the results. He who is truly, deeply, essentially honest, loves honesty so much better than any possible reward, that he chooses it every time apart from any consideration of its results, and neither hope nor fear, neither bribe nor threat, could tempt him away from his loyal allegiance.

IT is a critical moment in life when middle age awakens a man from the illusions that have been crowning the earlier years with inward glory. Some are willing to let the vision and the dream pass into easy oblivion, while they hasten to make up for lost time in close pursuit of the main chance. Others can forgive anything sooner than their own exploded ideal, and the ghost of their dead enthusiasm haunts them with an embittering presence.

WHAT is the reading of the best papers and books but conversing with the wisest men of all countries, who thereby communicate to us their deliberate thoughts, choicest notions, and best inventions, couched in good expression and digested in exact method? It supplies the room of experience, and furnishes us with prudence at the expense of others.

THERE is but one true, real, and right life for rational beings; only one life worth living, and worth living in this, or in any other life—past, present, and to come, and that is the eternal life, which was before all worlds, and will be after all are passed away—and that is nothing more nor less than a good life; a life of good feelings, good thoughts, good words and good deeds.

A CYNIC likens society to a long series of uprising ridges, which from the first to the last offer no valley of repose; wherever you take your stand, you are looked down upon by those above you, and reviled and pelted by those below you. Every creature you see is a farthing Sisyphus, pushing his little stone up some Lilliputian mole-hill. This is our world.

PROBABLY the summary of good breeding may be reduced to this rule: "Behave unto all men as you would they should behave unto you." This will most certainly oblige us to treat all mankind with respect, there being nothing that we desire more than to be treated so by them.

MEN who think for themselves do not believe quite so much as those do who take what they have from heresay; but it is a better quality of faith.

The World's Happenings.

A Lowell, Mass., man who died the other day was named Death.

Boots are again fashionably laced at the side, as well as up the instep.

When a person dies in Andaman they paint him red, white and blue.

Nearly 600 newspapers in the United States bear the name of "News."

A goose that crows like a rooster is one of the novelties at Cumberland, Md.

The farmers of Arkansas have a secret order called "The Agricultural Wheel."

Fricasseed lily petals are mentioned as a dainty that tickles the Chinaman's palate.

Slab Hollow, Vt., has petitioned the Post-office Department for a more dignified title.

All told, there were 2,261 collisions between Union and rebel troops during the war.

A crazy quilt shown in New York actually is put down in cold figures as worth $3,000.

Roman letters are used by all Christian nations except the Germans, Danes and Russians.

A newly-appointed postmistress in Indiana writes her official name, "Mrs. J. Smith, P. Mrs."

Marriages "out at sea" are reported to be growing very popular in some of the Pacific coast cities.

Those who catch folly as it flies, note that the latest shade of gray is named "frightened mouse."

There are more churches and chapels in London than in the whole of Italy. It has 316 railway stations.

A dog belonging to a Cincinnati shoe dealer chews tobacco, using a quarter of a ten-cent plug every day.

Coffee as a beverage is said to be rapidly losing ground in England, tea and chocolate being used in its place.

An Omaha woman kindly consented to have her picture taken in a group with her three divorced husbands.

Newspapers are used in the principal's room in the Visalia, Cal., public schools by pupils for reading exercises.

Over a pint of whisky was taken in two draughts, lately, by a North Georgian, who expired a short time thereafter.

A brass band in Lewiston, Me., gave a concert that netted $1.80, and a local paper speaks of it as a "financial success."

One of the latest things out is a hair cutting machine that goes by clockwork and trims a man's locks at any length desired.

South Florida beef, according to an unfriendly tourist, is so tough that it is practically impossible to stick a fork in the gravy.

We are told that at a game of whist the cards may be distributed among the players in 53,644,737,765,488,792,839,237,440,000 different ways.

A hard-hearted tramp not only stole the coats and caps of the pupils of a school at La Grange, Ind., but made away with twenty-six luncheons.

How do we taste when roasted? A reformed Fijian, who was once a cannibal, says that we taste like mule; but, then, who ever ate mule?

Chicago has had an exhibition of what is believed to be the largest steer in the world. The animal weighed 4,250 pounds, and was eighteen feet long.

A half breed Indian in the Dead River region has domesticated a bull moose, and uses him in his farm work. He is a good worker and a lively stepper.

A prominent young man at Richmond, Va., has been fined one cent and sentenced to one hour's imprisonment in jail for sending a challenge to fight a duel.

A big bear hunt, in which all the able-bodied citizens of Hope, Me., engaged, recently, resulted in the capture of a calf which had been the supposed bear.

"Judas as a Respectable Citizen," was the theme of a sermon by Rev. Thomas E. Converse, recently, at the First English Lutheran Church in Louisville, Ky.

The rascal who takes a note to a house and promises to wait for an answer, but only waits long enough to secure something from the entry rack, is on his rounds.

Married men are given the preference when applying for work at Mare Island, Cal., nor will bachelors be employed until the stock of Benedicts have been exhausted.

A 14-year-old lad was charged in a New York police court, the other day, with taking a bed and pillows from his home, selling them, and spending the proceeds for cigarettes.

The acting Mayor of Kansas City, Kan., wishing to pay off the city officers last month, stepped into the street and blew a police whistle as loudly as he could. He got them together.

According to a recent observer, consumption is often inherited through an heir taking for his personal use the consumptive decedent's old mattresses, carpets and upholstered chairs.

Scarlet fever was conveyed to a little girl of Watertown, N. Y., by a little friend who sent her a "loving kiss" on a sheet of paper. The little girl kissed the embossed spot and soon followed her playmate.

A clergyman of Albany, N. Y., who left his gold watch on the desk during a few minutes' absence from the pulpit on a recent Sabbath, was surprised on returning to find that some one had made off with it.

An ingenious Frenchman has conceived and carried into effect a plan for collecting the grease and other matter which defile the Seine, and making them into soap, glycerine, perfumery, etc., and is said to be reaping a rich harvest from his shrewdness and enterprise.

GONE.

BY E. O. S.

The sunshine fingers in the room,
I see it through the window stream,
Kissing the pillow, where he laid
His head, in many a boyish dream.
But, oh! the change since yesterday—
The young, strong step that so I miss,
The weary miles now stretching on
Between us, and my last fond kiss.

And mine had been a different plan,
A dream of sheltered nooks and bowers,
Of toil and pleasure hand in hand,
Of home and friends and merry hours;
But he had longed to try the world,
Its hopes, its promises, its cares,
To tempt Dame Fortune's fickle smile,
And win her to him unawares.

And so, with spirit bold and brave,
He pressed my hand in mute good-bye,
And turned aside, lest I should see
The tears that glistened in his eye.
And my poor heart was aching sore,
He might have heard each throb of pain;
My questioning heart, that yearned to know
If I should meet my boy again.

Oh, life is hard! The common lot
And parting wring the anguished heart.
But, oh! how differently we'd choose,
Yet see our fondest hopes depart!
We take the burden we would fain
Lay down, and fold our weary hands,
Praying our loss may be his gain,
Trusting to Him who understands.

"Her Francis."

BY VERA SINGLETON.

"MANY a true word is spoken in jest." So runs the old saying, and Mabel Talbot could for one have vouched for its truth, for a harmless jest became her fate.

She was one of a large family of boys and girls, had lived the twenty-two years of her life in a country village, and had never stayed more than a day at a time in London.

What an enchanted prospect then seemed to open before her when her friend Helen Keith asked her to spend the winter with herself and her mother in Florence!

As Mabel was starting, one young married sister said to her:

"I wonder if you will meet 'your Francis' at last?"

And another sister, with the superior wisdom of one who had just been wooed and won, answered for Mabel:

"Of course she will! only mind, Mabel, that you look well out for him."

"Your Francis" was the jest above alluded to.

One day Mabel had, in the hearing of eleven merry brothers and sisters, thoughtlessly said:

"How I dislike the abbreviation of Francis into Frank! Francis is a fine name, and Frank has no more character about it than Charlie or Harry."

That was enough; and the latest phase of the joke was the ludicrous notion, that as she was by far the prettiest of the family, she must be waiting for a certain "Francis" not only so named his godfathers and godmothers, but one who had never at any time been called by its abbreviation.

Mabel laughed as merrily as any of them and then forgot all about "her Francis" until she reached the Italian frontier, when for the first time her journey became marked by some vicissitudes.

On a cold, stormy night the train was stopped at the little station of C——, for the floods were out.

A scene of confusion ensued.

After the Italian guards had made the sleepy and alarmed foreigners understand what had occurred, everyone naturally left the train to seek what accomodation could be found in the village; only, however, to return with vexation added to their former alarm.

The one ristorary inn could only take in a few of the passengers, and the remainder had to make back again to their carriages with the difference of being wet through instead of dry.

Mabel Talbot was one of the fortunate ones.

Some kindly arms—whose she never knew—carried her and her small luggage safely over the water and she made her way to the inn.

She could not speak a word of Italian, but quickly comprehended how kind and sympathetic was her welcome.

Neither gratitude, however, nor a vivid imagination could help her to feel comfortable.

Her narrow passage room had a damp, stone floor, was lighted by a small wick floating in oil, and was pervaded by a smell of garlic.

Her bed was a narrow table, her pillow her carpet-bag, and her travelling rug had to do duty for everything else.

As she lay there cramped and shivering, she became gradually accustomed to the dim light and saw an object which had escaped her notice and which looked like a coat lying across a chair.

She was not long in fetching it, and, even in the semi-darkness, saw that it was a thick-tweed English ulster, probably the property of one of her fellow-passengers who, she had little doubt, would have given much to be wearing it at that moment.

She felt, however, that it was little use pitying the unlucky owner: and very grateful to him for having left it, she lay down again and spread it over her.

Her teeth stopped chattering, her eyes closed, and she went off into a sound sleep.

When the noises made by the awakening household began to disturb her, the following dream came to her:—

She dreamt that she was engaged to be married to a not particularly young man, whose christian name was—Francis.

His face made a strong impression upon her.

It was not strictly handsome, but the owner had what is called a fine head.

Further, he had a kindly expression and a slightly inquisitive look in his keen gray eyes which was very characteristic.

How they came to be engaged she was unable to remember, but he seemed to know her well, for he was asking her to call him Frank.

"Not for the world!" she said. "I hate the name. You would not seem yourself at all. I might just as well call you Charlie or Harry."

"We have it on very good authority that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet," he answered, smiling.

"Then Shakespeare was wrong," returned the dreamer, not smiling at all.

"Am I to take it for granted, then, that you took me for my name and not for myself?"

"Your name is Francis," persisted Mabel.

"I am aware of it. But Francis or Frank I am myself."

"And yourself is Francis."

But in spite of her obstinacy she got the worst of the argument, and the soft-hearted Francis, seeing signs of tears, offered to make it up.

She would not, however, accept his kiss of peace, and at that moment, awoke to find herself struggling so much that she had nearly fallen off the table.

The velvet collar of the ulster was lying across her mouth, its soft touch, having, no doubt, suggested that lover-like ending to her dream.

At first Mabel was too bewildered to distinguish dream from reality; but the daylight streaming in at the curtainless window gave her a vague idea that she must be "up and doing."

As she jumped down she dragged the ulster with her, and as she lifted it up a letter fell out of one of the pockets.

She would have been no true daughter of Eve had she not been seized with a desire to know the name of the owner of that coat, under the comforting warmth of which she had slept so well and also dreamt that ridiculous dream.

"Why should I not know the name?" she asked herself, picking up the letter.

And as there was no one to answer her—only her very natural curiosity to urge her the other way—she did read the name:—

"Francis Grantley, Esquire!"

CHAPTER II.

"NOW don't be foolish and get excited about nothing," said Mabel to herself "for you would have dreamt exactly the same dream if Mr. Grantley's name had been Thomas or John."

This seemed so true that she did preserve some calmness of mind.

"Any way you and he are never likely to meet as long as you live, for he is probably on his way to India, or regions equally remote."

And with this last self-comforting admonition she resolutely put the letter back in its place and folded up the coat.

"He was never called Frank, I am sure," she soliloquized, unable to keep from the forbidden subject, as she remarked the unusual length and breadth of the coat, though of course Franks are of all sizes. "Poor man!" she continued as she felt its thickness. "Perhaps if he had known what a boon it was to me he would not have minded so much shivering all night. I wish I could let him know how much obliged I am.—— And why should he not know it?" as a sudden thought struck her.

If she could have spoken Italian she would have left a message with the landlord; therefore, instead, she scribbled in pencil, on the back of the letter;

"Many thanks for the loan of the coat."

What is done cannot be undone.

Perhaps no one ever realized that more thoroughly than did Mabel Talbot, when she saw those few pencilled words of hers staring back at her from a stranger's letter. She could not possibly tear up the envelope; she could only thrust the letter back into the pocket of the coat and hide her own deed from her own eyes.

How devotedly she hoped that Mr. Grantley really was on his way to India! The further off the better.

And during her journey she registered many a vow never again to act on any occasion in life without due reflection.

The Keiths had rooms on the sunny side of the river, on the 'Lung' Arno Acciajoli; and coming, as Mabel did, from the gray November skies of England, she perfectly revelled in the sunny weather which set in on her arrival in that brightest of cities.

She was also, according to Helen Keith (a handsome, clever woman, in every way a contrast to pretty little inexperienced Mabel in one succession of "gushes" over every picture and statue, piece of tapestry and mosaic, the Cathedral and Giotto's Tower, the Baptistry and the wonderful gates which Michael Angelo pronounced fit to be the gates of Paradise; Fra Angelico's angels and the Lucca della Robbia, &c.

So full of delight and excitement was she that for some days she forgot both her whimsical dream and her fears.

Under Helen Keith's guidance she was made to "do" Florence thoroughly.

Helen had her own opinions about most things, which she expected Mabel to accept and Mabel, not being given to original thought, was nothing loth to be helped over this her first stile into the domains of art. One morning, however, Helen took her to Giotto's little chapel in the church of Santa Croce, and, giving her Ruskin's little pamphlet, let her puzzle the matter out for herself.

Very puzzled did Mabel feel, as she leant against the wall opposite the fresco which depicts the trial by fire before the Soldan, and read out a sentence here and there.

She was quite deep in thought when she heard spoken, very quietly, in English:

"What a pretty voice!"

"And a still prettier face! What brown eyes and golden hair!" said another voice.

At that moment two gentlemen, presumably the speakers, descended the steps of the chapel behind her, and, as they did so, Mabel made a sudden dart forward.

Enveloping one of the two, a very tall man, was the ulster; she would have known it again anywhere!

CHAPTER III.

AS Mabel started forward, Helen sprang after her.

"Mabel!" she cried, aghast, "do you want to show the pretty face?"

"My face!" said Mabel looked at her in amazement. "No; I want to see his."

It was now Helen's turn to look amazed, the more so that Mabel suddenly colored violently all over that pretty face so little in her thoughts, and turning sharply away stared blindly at a medallion of St. Louis through a rush of tears which had quickly come into her eyes.

Whether she was most vexed with herself, or mortified by her friend, or disappointed in her desire, she could not possibly have told.

"I don't understand, Mabel," said Helen, very gently. "You cannot know those men, or they would not have spoken so of you?"

Mabel made the worst answer she could have chosen. "No I don't know them. I only know the ulster that one of them wore."

"His ulster!" cried Helen Keith, laughing and wondering whether Mabel was losing her senses.

Mabel knew that in her place, she would have felt the same, but, being in her own, she was not at all amused, was unaccountably sore, and certainly felt very foolish. Outside the church Helen began again.

"You really do not know those men, Mabel?"

Mabel had grown wiser; she only shook her head.

"Then I may as well tell you that I know one of them—the man who spoke of the pretty voice and who also wore the ulster—very well."

"No! do you really?" cried Mabel, very eagerly.

Helen was more than ever mystified. "He is one of our neighbors at home," she continued; "so you will soon get to know something more of him than his coat."

Life is not all art in Florence, and Mabel went to a dance that evening where she might have thought herself in England but for a sprinkling of uniforms and some artistic and musical heads.

The foreign element would have interested her had she not been on the look out for an English face.

She believed herself to be very rational, yet she saw no face like her dream "Francis," and soliloquised on the folly of the English, who keep up their usual habits wherever they go.

How could anyone dance all the evening after sight-seeing all day?

At that moment she heard Helen say:

"Francis, come and be introduced to Mabel Talbot. Mabel, this is another of my old friends, Mr. Grantley."

There was no weariness about Mabel now, and Helen wondered at the excitement which lit up the usually pale face and soft eyes.

"Miss Keith tells me that this is your first visit to Italy," said Mr. Grantley when Helen had left them.

Mabel summoned the courage to look up—looked and met the very same shrewd eyes which she had seen in her dream!

But, together with the shock of her surprise, came the comforting reassurance that those eyes were looking at something quite new to them.

And indeed it was a very pleasant sight they looked at but she was too full of her secret thoughts to notice the evident admiration she was causing.

"Of course," she was saying to herself, "as he was one of my fellow travellers, I must have seen him without remembering it."

And this practical explanation of a seemingly mysterious occurrence restored her equanimity.

She did not let their conversation rest long on a commonplace footing, and very soon managed to introduce the word "adventure."

"The days for adventure are over," he said.

"But not for odd things," she returned, provoked into boldness.

He threw back his head and laughed.

"You are quite right, and the oddest thing happened only the other day. I was a passenger in that train which was stopped by the floods. Perhaps you may remember about it?"

Perhaps she could!

"Well, I scrambled out into the water like everyone else and found some sort of accommodation at the inn.

"At the last moment, however, I changed my mind; only, worse luck, I left my ulster in the little hole of a room that I was to have occupied."

"Were you not very cold without it?" asked Mabel, finding it impossible not to betray some sympathy now that she learnt that she was really indebted to him for the room, as well as, by chance, for the coat.

"Oh, yes; but then I was accustomed to the ups and downs of travel; and the night was soon over."

"Did you recover your coat easily in the morning?"

"At once: for the lady who had occupied the room had already left it. But now to come to the point of my story. A few days ago I looked for a letter which I had left in the pocket of my ulster, and what do you think I found written at the back of it?"

Mabel could think very well and felt herself blushing hotly.

"Many thanks for the loan of the coat!"

"What a bold creature!" said Mabel, thinking, that she would rather say it herself than hear it from him. To her amazement all mirth vanished from his face.

"Bold!" he cried, looking indignantly at her. "On the contrary, I think it was very thoughtful and sympathetic. I am sure she is a charming girl."

"Why not a charming old lady?"

"Old!" Then he smiled and looked beyond the bright, listening face as if he saw something almost as sweet. "No, I know that she was young. The landlord called her a Signorina."

"Everybody is called a Signorina in Italy," said Mabel hastily, not all his championship having shaken her opinion that she had done a supremely silly thing. "The very blind beggars who stand propped up against the sunny walls of the Lung' Arno address every woman they beg as from Signorina."

"No use, Miss Talbot; I have a theory about the writer of those words and you will not laugh me out of it. I do not suppose that she was a young girl, as she was alone, but she was certainly new to travelling or she would have taken the good chances with the bad ones more philosophically."

What a description of herself, thought Mabel.

"No, no," he went on smilingly. "I have my ideal and I shall keep to it. And, what is more, if she is in Florence, sooner or later, I shall identify her."

"But you know nothing of her except her handwriting."

"And is not that enough?"

Looking at his keen eyes, and remembering that he was an habitue of the Keiths' house, Mabel felt sure that it was quite enough.

And her heart sank within her.

CHAPTER IV.

THAT was not the only time that Mabel Talbot and Mr. Grantley discussed the "charming girl" who had permitted herself such a liberty with his letter.

But though he persistently stood her champion, it did not prevent his falling—and very completely too—in love with this very pretty young woman of two-and-twenty who was as fresh and merry as a child.

No day passed without his seeking Mabel.

One day he overtook her carrying a book from the library.

"Mrs. Oliphant's Life of St. Francis! Ah! my namesake," he said, taking her book from her.

"More likely your namesake if he had been St. Frank," answered Mabel laughing.

He laughed too as he said: "That does not sound very saint-like. But, as it happens, I have never been called Frank in my life. My dear mother disliked the abbreviation; and, oddly enough at school, though my nicknames were numberless, Frank was not one."

As he told her this, Mabel felt that it was no use saying any more against herself.

The children had been right, and she had found a Francis after all.

But was he her Francis?

From that day she felt an absurd jealousy of that ideal young lady traveller.

More than ever did she dread the thought of his discovering her identity with herself.

She became even more vigilant in concealing all writing of hers and also avoided the subject as much as possible.

Helen Keith, however, who had long known his side of the story, brought it up one day during a walk up the hills to Fiesole, the little Etruscan city which overlooks Florence.

"No," he answered. "I have not seen the handwriting, but I shall see it one day." Then he had one of his hearty laughs, in which Helen could not help joining. Mabel on any other subject would have laughed too.

"I know I shall see it," he continued; "I feel it in the air. Don't you feel things in the air, sometimes, Miss Keith?"

"Yes, I feel a Tramontana like to-day." And Helen shivered as the fierce north wind met them, and she quickly drew a shawl up to her face, but it was chiefly to hide a smile.

She knew Mr. Grantley's feelings for Mabel; also the latter's ridiculous and evident jealousy—a fact which could not but give him hope.

"How practical you are, Miss Keith. You seem to take delight in snubbing me. You snubbed me, I remember, the first time I had the pleasure of speaking to you."

"Did I? Then I beg you pardon. I won't do it again."

"But I like it," he said quickly. "Pray snub me—in your own way—as much as you like."

"If you talk of feeling a strange handwriting in the air, I warn you that I shall do so."

"But I do feel it, I assure you. Did you

never play at the game of crying hot and cold? Well, I feel like that. I feel near to very hot."

"Then you may be sure that this north wind will be followed by a south one. A Sirocco always follows a Tramontana."

He was, however, to prove himself right. The very next day, when the Keiths and Mabel returned from a drive they found Francis Grantley awaiting their return.

Mabel had only made a few steps into the room when she gave a suppressed shriek and turned to fly.

"Mabel! what is the matter" cried Mrs. Keith and her daughter.

"A great deal is the matter," said Mr. Grantley, an ill-concealed joyousness in his voice, while he watched Mabel as a cat watches a mouse. "A great deal, I can tell you. I have been nearly roasted in your room."

Mrs. Keith, always the most concerned of hostesses, went up to the fire, when her daughter gently but firmly turned her towards the door.

"Surely I might take off one of the logs," Mrs. Keith was heard expostulating as the two were left together and alone—Francis Grantley comparing a pencil list of books, written out by Mabel, left lying on the table, with an envelope on which were written her thanks—and Mabel, her hands before her eyes afraid to see in his what he thought of her.

In some more polite form he must be going to rudely break the waking dream which had followed the real one.

"Her Francis" he could no longer be now.

But what happened instead?

He was kneeling at her feet, trying to remove her hands from before her face.

"Miss Talbot! Mabel! You dearest and sweetest——"

His words ceased abruptly and he sprang up as the door opened and Helen looked cautiously in.

When she entered the room followed by several visitors, Francis Grantley was its sole occupant.

He and Mabel had only a second of time to look at each other, but during that second their hearts had mutely finished and answered those interrupted words.

CHAPTER V.

MABEL was in a tumult of joy.

He did not think of her as her sensitive love had feared, but she was his sweetest and dearest——"

The remainder she could fill up for herself. Had she not known "her Francis" before he had known her? Had she not seen that look of love on his face before?

When she returned to the sitting-room her joy received its first check.

Francis Grantley was gone, but other visitors had come who seemed to be all talking at once.

Helen's words were the only ones out of which she could make any sense.

"How lucky that he left the telegram behind, otherwise we should have thought he had taken leave of his senses. I trust he will see his friend alive. He must, I think have caught the Rome express. He certainly wasted no time in good-byes or explanations."

Mabel caught Helen's eyes and the loving sympathy in them made her hide her face over the forgotten telegram which had become common property.

It was as Helen had said.

Francis Grantley had been summoned to Rome to the deathbed of a friend, and a glance at her watch told her that he could no longer be in Florence.

For some days no news came from him. Helen thought it very strange, but as Mabel seemed only to think of his trouble, she kept her own thoughts to herself.

Mabel, however, was only acting a part. As the days went by a small voice—a treacherous one it seemed to her—kept whispering that he ought to have found time to write—if only one word to complete those interrupted spoken ones.

Then she would recall that glance which they had exchanged and her joy returned in full.

She would have found those days more difficult to pass through had she not been partly taken out of herself by the unexpected arrival of a dear friend on the evening of Mr. Grantley's departure.

This was one Hugh Sedley, a young man some years her senior, who was engaged to her favorite cousin, Charlotte Burns.

He was one of those sunny faced, bright eyed people who when they have troubles win the sympathy of others at once.

His trouble was six months delay of his marriage, and he could not have found a more sympathetic recipient of all his thoughts and feelings than Mabel was at that moment.

She needed distraction and she felt so sorry for any sort of disappointment to be borne, that by the time she had done the honors of Florence to him all day and let him talk everlastingly of Charlotte, they both felt their sorrows lightened.

Helen Keith, however, who was not in Hugh's confidence, felt a trouble grow within her the lighter theirs grew, but Mabel's natural reserve made it impossible for her even to hint at danger which perhaps might be merely imagination.

She could only try to keep them apart as much as possible and she succeeded so far well that Mabel spent the greater part of Christmas Day with other friends.

Towards evening she returned, and seeing Helen and Hugh Sedley talking over the fire, she went up to her room and sat in the dusk, glad of this moment of solitude with her own painful thoughts.

There must be some mistake!

He must have written, and the letter had never been posted; or in that busy season had miscarried; and so perhaps he was blaming her too.

That some news of him would reach her that day, she felt sure.

He would never let it pass without a word of greeting to the Keiths.

At this moment Helen entered the room dressed for dinner.

Mabel started up, thinking it must be late.

Perhaps she had news for her.

"What are you doing there in the dark?" The suspiciousness in her voice made Helen force a laugh.

"No harm," replied Mabel. "I was having a sort of meditation among the tombs."

Helen's answer was to put her arm suddenly round Mabel.

"Why, Helen, what is it?" she asked, startled and uneasy at her action and then at her silence. "There is no bad news? Nothing from home?"

"No, nothing from your home. Indeed mamma herself received only one letter this morning. It was from Naples."

"From Naples," echoed Mabel a little faintly. "Who does she know there? Helen, speak! who is in Naples?" she repeated, a deadly chill creeping over her at her friend's ominous silence.

"Many people—Francis Grantley, for one."

"But he will be here to-morrow—or the next day?"

"He said he did not know when he should return. Perhaps he might run over to Cairo or Algiers."

Cairo or Algiers or the other end of the world; it was all the same to Mabel Talbot.

* * * * * *

Mabel never willingly recalled the hour which followed Helen's leaving the room until she started up and dressed herself in feverish haste.

In that short time she seemed to have become some other Mabel Talbot, who would soon have to return to the home where she had passed more than twenty years of tranquil happiness, carrying with her a remembrance which she could ask no one to help her to bear.

A remembrance that accident had thrown a cast in her way, that the Fates had willed that its owner should be named Francis, and that the said unlucky Mabel Talbot had scribbled a few words on the back of a letter.

And that was all the story?

No. Something more.

She had taken falseness for truth.

It was no dream, that scene that she had taken part in, and that Helen had been obliged to interrupt, and had therefore been a witness to.

Yet was it unreal as a dream, for it had been an acted lie.

And the days went on.

One afternoon she was near the post-office, and was overtaken by a heavy shower.

While she stood under the colonnades, Hugh Sedley suddenly rushed past her.

He stopped short on seeing her.

"Oh, Mabel," he said breathlessly, "so awfully sorry you were not in. I read Lottie's last letter to Helen Keith. Lottie is the best girl in all the world. You don't half know what she is."

"I ought to do so," answered Mabel, smiling involuntarily, "for I have known her ever since she was born."

Hugh looked rather jealously at her, and then laughed.

"Well, never mind. I shall have her all to myself soon. But I must be off and post this to her. I'll come this evening and read you out what she says."

Mabel, still smiling, notwithstanding the trouble with which she fought night and day, went to see if the shower were over.

Only a few drops were falling, so she set off.

The narrow dark street into which she turned was unusually crowded with carts and carriages, and, engrossed with her own miserable thoughts, she never noticed until she was in the thick of them—for it had no footway—that she was in danger of being run over.

Suddenly she felt herself seized and drawn back, but only just in time.

She looked up to thank Hugh Sedley as she expected, and found herself face to face with—Francis Grantley!

But a Francis Grantley such as she had never seen, either in dreamland or in life, holding out a rigid arm for her to take, which might have been that of a statue insensible to human touch, so cold and expressionless did his face look.

The bitter suffering of the last few weeks surged in her brain and seemed to set it on fire as she saw the stony face of the man who had caused it.

Had a thousand deaths been before her she would willingly have died them all sooner than accept the support he offered her.

Without one word of thanks for saving the life that he had embittered for always, she turned and left him.

Had she but looked back, she would have seen nothing stony about him then.

Could he have been mistaken?

What did that proud, face, those burning, indignant eyes mean?

"You have no umbrella," he said hoarsely, as he overtook her; "and another heavy shower is coming."

She darted under a near archway.

He followed her leisurely and found her as far inside as she could go, her pale face and glowing eyes brought out in in curious relief by the light of a lamp before a shrine in the opposite wall.

Why did he not let her alone, she asked herself.

What bitter mockery of her pain! To care nothing for breaking her heart, but much that a few drops of rain should fall upon her!

She felt more than saw that he was examining her closely.

"You are changed, Miss Talbot," he said. "A few weeks ago a shower would not have struck you dumb."

Changed!

Mabel would have forced herself to deny this had it not been for something in his tone.

Had his voice trembled?

Her expression was less hard as she stammered out: "I was startled, surprised. I did not know that you were in Florence."

He leant towards her, and all his words were low but very distinct.

"Why not say at once that my presence here is unwelcome to you."

She changed color, and her lips trembled a little.

"The rude suggestion was yours and not mine."

"At least confess," and he came a step nearer; "that you are disappointed that it was not Mr. Sedley who prevented your committing suicide—as you seemed clearly bent upon doing."

"Mr.—who?" asked Mabel, still not understanding what was in his mind, from sheer surprise at hearing the name on his lips.

"Yes, Mr. Sedley," he repeated. Allow me to make amends, and congratulate you now, then."

Mabel never quite remembered what happened as she stood and listened to the few words which revealed to her the cause of his unaccountable conduct.

It flashed across her for the first time that, after all, they had never been quite engaged and had never had a thorough explanation.

Subsequent events, rumor, might easily have made him believe her to be engaged to Hugh Sedley, and that she had only been amusing herself with him!

What could he have thought of her!

But he still loved her!

The rush of joy flooding her heart almost stifled her, and she rushed out into the rain.

He brought her back. "Why do you not thank me for my congratulations?" he asked.

"Because I don't happen to be the woman that he is going to marry."

"Who is, then?"

"My cousin—Charlotte Burns."

He staggered against the wall as white as death.

"Great heavens! What lies people tell! Mabel, if you saw a fellow creature starving you could not hold food to his lips and then draw it away again?"

"I have spoken the truth."

"And yet you spent all your time with him until report gave him to you as your affianced husband?"

"I gave him my time and my sympathy, as I would have given them to my own brothers. He is almost a brother to me."

A deep sob shook him from head to foot. Mabel crept nearer to him, and the next few words were spoken with both her hands in his.

"Mabel, listen. When I was forced to leave you without even a word of farewell, I meant to return immediately, but my poor friend lingered—and died; and even before then those lying rogues dealt me a death-blow. Mabel, if you ever had any love for me, tell me. It may not be too late for me to win it back."

And as he stooped his head to catch her whispered words, he heard her say that she had always loved him, even when she had tried to forget him—always—even before she had known him.

* * * * * *

"Mabel," he said, a little hesitatingly when they were indoors. "I want you to do something for me—if only for once?"

"What can it possibly be—Frank?" she said in a very small voice, and blushing rosy red.

He smiled at her answer, yet a sigh of relief escaped him, making him feel rather foolish.

He looked down at her and she looked up, and then they both laughed.

The Fabric of a Vision.

BY VERA SINGLETON.

EVERYONE but Edward and myself looked on our marriage as a misfortune.

To be sure we were the persons most interested, and to us it seemed the most desirable thing in the world.

My father and mother did not like the notion from the first, though Edward had arranged to stay in Australia for two years at any rate.

Edward was not strong; indeed he had come out for his health; and beyond the fact that his introductory letters were all that such things should be, we knew nothing about him.

I knew more than the others, certainly; for I knew that I should be happy with him anywhere, even in England, and that the dearest duty of my life would be to take a wife's care of him.

We had taken a house at Glenelg and there we were to live an ideal life, till Edward grew quite strong, when we were to go to England.

Edward was an only son, and Mr. Norreys, his father, was rich; so as he said, our future was tolerably secure.

So much for intentions.

We had not been married a week when a telegram came to say that old Mr. Norreys was dead, and we left Adelaide by the next homeward bound steamer.

It was terrible for him.

I had my own selfish trouble too, in being so suddenly rooted up out of the old familiar soil of home love.

But we were all in all to each other, the voyage did him a great deal of good, and my heartache was wearing itself out by the time we landed at Gravesend.

Of London I did not have a cheerful experience.

It was June when we got there, and the dirty old Babylon was as smoky, as hot and altogether as unpleasant as I had ever imagined it.

Of its "sights" I saw none, except the dingy hotel sitting-room where I spent my days, while Edward was busy among lawyers in Lincoln's Inn, or at the rooms in the Albany, where his father had died.

I had nothing to do all day but to worry myself, and fancy that Edward was looking ill again, and consequently was more than glad when some cousins of his at Carlisle wrote and asked us to come down to visit them. Edward at first did not want to go, but when he saw it would please me, he consented.

We left London on the first of July. It was a lovely morning.

How delicious it was to get away to the clear country air, and receive my first glimpse of English country.

It charmed me; but railway travelling always affects me in one way: before I can quite realize that I don't want to fall asleep. I did so now.

When I awoke, Edward was speaking:

"Wake up, Mary," he was saying. "You are very tired and so am I. We're coming to a very pretty place, and I mean to get out here and stay till to-morrow. You'll be done up before we get to Carlisle, if we push on to-day."

"What nonsense," I returned, instinctively putting my hair to rights, as a woman always does when she wakes up after a traveling nap. "I always sleep in trains. You don't know all my bad ways yet."

"I know your way of making yourself a willing martyr to other people's plans," laughed Edward; "but I want to stop here, if you'll permit it. In fact I can't go on. The noise of the train shakes my head all to pieces."

"Don't you think," I ventured, "as we've got the tickets—and they expect us——"

"Oh, hang the tickets," laughed my husband, beginning to get down hat-box, rugs and bags, from the netting overhead. "I've a strong fancy for seeing this place again—an overwhelming fancy for your seeing it. My dear Mary, I always have my own way, you know that."

It was quite true.

His own way was generally as good a way as any other, I must admit, and Calverley—the place we stopped at—proved quite as pretty as he said it was.

Certainly there was a factory at one end of the little town, but it did not spoil anything of the picturesqueness of the place. Only the river that ran through was not clear and bright as rivers should be, but dark and foul—and its very foam, where its path was made difficult with stones, was not white but yellow.

The factory itself was not ugly.

It was large and white; not one big block, but a number of scattered buildings grouped irregularly round a big reservoir.

This was walled round, and the strip of earth between wall and water was covered with long grass, aflame with great scarlet poppies.

There was a wooded hill behind the "works," and to the left stretched the slate roofs of the town, under whose stone bridge the river flowed tumultuously.

There was nothing like this near Adelaide.

The novelty of it all was quite bewildering.

I saw so much, and heard so much during the afternoon, that I was fit for nothing in the evening but to lie on a very hard sofa trying to read an old railway novel.

Edward said he would take a turn with a cigar—and I had a very dull time of it indeed.

It was a lovely evening. I could not wonder that Edward stayed out to enjoy it.

But when the sun had gone redly down, when the gold and crimson after-glow had faded to faintest primrose and coral, and when at last the moon showed brightly in the deepening blue of the sky, I did think it was time he came back.

It was half-past ten when he at last came.

"All in the dark?" he asked. "Why didn't you ring for lights?"

His voice seemed to shake a little as he threw himself into an arm-chair at the other end of the room.

"What's the matter?" I said. "I'm afraid you overtired yourself, Edward. I wish I had gone with you."

"Yes, that's just what it is," he replied, hurriedly. "I am overtired, and I feel quite faint. Just ring, Mary, will you?"

I rang; and he ordered some champagne whereat I was rather astonished, for he rarely took anything after dinner.

"We both seemed rather dull," he said, explanatorily, as the man left the room. "It's my fault for having been away from you so long. I was an idiot to go out. I can't get on without my wife."

"Then I wonder that you stopped out so long," I said. "You could have come back ages before, if you had wanted to do so."

"I lost my way," he replied, "and went farther than I intended."

Then the waiter came in with the champagne and glasses and two tall candles on a tray.

By the light from these last I thought Edward looked very, very tired.

I dislike champagne and would not have any, and he went on drinking glass after glass and talking in a rather inconsequent way till the bottle was finished.

I was rather cross at having been alone all the evening, perhaps his London business had tired him as much as his walk; but there was a cloud between us, the first since our marriage.

Until now there had always been between us such a perfect sympathy and rapport. He seemed far off from me as he sat there, talking.

I felt sure that all that champagne could not be good for him.

That night—I suppose about two o'clock—I woke to find myself sitting up in bed, trembling with horror, my heart beating tumultuously.

"What is it?" said Edward, in a very wide-awake voice. "Whatever is the matter, Mary?"

"I have had such a horrible dream!" I replied, as soon as I could steady my voice. "Did I say anything, Edward?"

"No; you only gave a blood-curdling scream. What was your dream about?"

"Oh—it was a nightmare," I said, lying back on the pillow and hugging my heart with both hands. "I don't want to talk about it. Did I wake you?"

"No, I've not been asleep. Don't throw your arms up again, Mary, but try and go to sleep. You won't dream it again, that's certain; nightmares never come twice."

I closed my eyes obediently, but only to conjure up again and again the picture that dream had shown me.

This is what I saw over and over again, through the hot, still, moon-white hours:—

First a broad grassy field, through which ran a dark smooth stream.

There was a wooden bridge over it, and just below this the river ran over a ledge of rock and went smoothly down in an unbroken sheet.

Then it broke into yellow foam and hurried on.

It looked deep. There was a wood behind me; just before me was a footpath.

I saw everything in the clear moonlight.

Along the footpath came presently two figures, and one of them was a figure I knew.

It was Edward; looking strange, in some undefinable way—but still Edward unmistakably.

Walking about a yard from him was a girl, dressed in a muslin gown.

Her head was bare, and in her hand she held a white sun bonnet.

At the end of the bridge they stood still and faced each other, and the girl's face was turned towards me.

It was a pale face, with red lips and a high nose.

A high-bred uncommon-looking face. The head was set well on the shoulders, and the rounded figure was thrown back in an attitude of defiance.

"Never," she said, and her big eyes flashed in the moonlight; "you've deceived me too often. I'll never see you again. Why did you not marry me when you had the chance?"

"I wish I had. Oh, Winifred, come to me; it is not too late yet. You see I couldn't keep away from here," and he held out his hands to her.

Then their voices sank till I could only hear a vague murmur.

Then her voice rang out again, clear and sharp:

"No, Mr. Norreys; I tell you, no! There are other men in the world—ay, and in Calverley too—who have better and higher notions of keeping faith than you have."

"Do you mean that you'll marry one of them?" he said.

"Yes, and you will soon know how sincerely I mean it."

"Then, by heavens, he shall marry a ghost!" Edward cried, and caught her in his arms.

There was a sudden splash—a choked cry—and something white went over the shelving wall down those seven feet into the smooth brown water.

Then came the crowning horror of the dream.

He turned round with a look on his face of such fear and agony as I have never seen before. I knew the girl was drowned.

And I seemed to tear my way through wood and bramble back into consciousness, and into that still bedroom at the Calverley Arms.

Why did I not tell my husband what I had dreamed? Well, in those first moments of waking, so vivid, so utterly real and life-like had been that vision that I felt that to tell him the dream would be like charging him with the deed.

I wished he had remained with me last evening.

And why had he wanted so much to stay at Calverley, and why had he seemed so strange when he came in?

I stopped these questions resolutely.

Why should I try to connect Edward's actions with that idiotic nightmare?

And then I fell to thinking of all I had ever heard of dreams that had come true, and wondering whether other prophetic dreams were half as real seeming as this one of mine, to which no importance was to be attached.

And the east quickened and the birds woke.

I turned and looked at my husband by the clear light.

He was asleep—looking very tired and unwell, but with no change on his face such as——

But what was I thinking about?

Then came common sense, and whispered: "You little simpleton, you don't deserve so good a husband. Your love is a bad sentry if it cannot keep out such nightmare nonsense as this."

By the time the full sun light had filled the room I was almost ready to laugh at myself for thinking twice about such nonsense; but I was, all the same, so much aware of the vague influence that dream had engendered in me, that I would not for worlds have told Edward a word about it.

"I am afraid I was rather growly last night," said Edward at breakfast; "but I really was quite knocked up with my long walk."

"I was disgracefully cross myself," I admitted, handing him his coffee, "but I missed you so all the evening. Long separations don't seem to agree with either of us."

"What do you say to loitering about a little in these parts before we go on to Carlisle, Mary? It's a very pretty country and it's much nicer being by ourselves than with anyone else."

"Of course it is," I admitted; "but my dear Edward, we have written to the Westlakes to say we're coming."

"Then write again and say long railway journeys don't agree with me, and that we can only reach them by easy stages. And as I haven't half explored Calverley yet, shall we stay here a day or two? This seems a nice comfortable hotel."

"Oh no" I answered with a shudder; "let's get out of this. A little of Calverley goes a long way."

And so it happened that the same day found us at the Royal Hart, Branscombe.

The Royal Hart, Branscombe was a magnificent model of all that an inn ought not to be.

The landlord and servants seemed alike to look on guests as personal enemies to be harassed, worried, and made miserable by every means in their power.

But in spite of all discomforts I spent a much pleasanter evening there at the well-appointed "Calverley Arms."

Edward seemed quite himself again, and I myself felt in my usual spirits.

This sudden scheme of rambling through the pleasant district of mid-England, in the height of summer, was delightful to me.

It would be like a wedding tour, a second honeymoon, I said.

We wandered about in the woods all the evening, and I was so tired that I dropped asleep directly my head touched the soft pillow.

How long had I been asleep?

I awoke shivering with fear.

For, incredible as it may seem, the terrible experience of the night before had been repeated, to every smallest detail.

Again the river, the bridge, the lovers, the sudden splash and cry, and then the face of my husband turned towards me with that frantic horror on it!

This time I did not cry out, only drew my breath quickly and lay rigid, unable to move or speak, though I knew, somehow, that Edward was awake.

"Now then, Mary," he said tenderly, "no dreams again." What a start you gave!"

His voice broke the spell.

"Oh dear," I said, "I don't think travelling agrees with me. I never had such dreams before."

And then I lay silent, thinking how strangely the first dream must have affected me, for it to have reproduced itself thus exactly.

I couldn't tell Edward now about it, because he would wonder so why I hadn't told him yesterday.

For the next week we wandered about from one charming place to another.

"Where are your notes?" said my husband, one morning. "They don't seem to flourish on this English air."

They did not, indeed.

Though I was young, though my husband seemed to adore me, though we were spending our days in the loveliest English country, I was beginning to feel that my life was hardly worth having.

Most of us have had the same dream twice over.

But, reader, has it ever occurred to you to dream the same dream, and that a horror too deep for description, for seven consecutive nights?

That was what had befallen me.

On the eighth day we reached Ammersley.

The town was full of excursionists, and the only rooms we could get were two tiny apartments, with the width of the house between them.

I felt a little uneasy when I went to bed. My nerves were beginning to suffer from the strain of this nightly terror.

How should I feel when I woke, as—I knew I should—with that vision still before my eyes—in that little room alone?

I did not like to think of it.

When I awoke, the whole room was full of the strong sunlight that streamed through the uncurtained window.

I had a fair, full, perfect night of sound sleep.

The enchantment was over.

The spell was broken. The dream had not come.

Oh, the relief of that waking.

To feel that the torture was over, that the vision, with its maddening air of reality had ceased to visit me!

I went downstairs humming a tune.

In the evening we were sitting at the end of the inn garden.

It was an intensely still evening, and with the hush that comes before a storm, the world in a hush that makes people say there is electricity in the air.

There were green trees in the garden, and long grass—and under a grey old lichen-covered apple tree was the wooden seat on which we were sitting.

The birds were quite silent, and into our talk a silence came presently, as on such evenings silence will do.

I slipped my hand into my husband's, and we sat there quietly.

I did not fall asleep.

No; I am quite sure of that.

There was no half-conscious interval—no drowsy interlude.

Straight from that fair inn garden which had seemed to me like a little paradise, I was taken back to my dream-spot, that wood by the river.

Presently the two figures came along again, and the whole scene was enacted.

After the climax, I found myself in the garden seat, Edward's hand in mine, and such a deadly sensation of weakness, exhaustion, and utter prostration as I had never felt in all my healthy life. When I spoke my voice sounded like some one else's.

"Edward I am tired. Let us go in."

"All right," he answered, "Why, what's the matter, Mary? You look like a ghost!"

"I'm tired of moving about. I cannot keep it up. Let us go on to the Westlakes. Shall I write to-night?" I said, eager for any change.

"Yes, if you like!"

And I went indoors to write my letter to the Westlakes.

Having written it, sat by the open window waiting for Edward to come in from the garden and tell me the exact address.

I sat scribbling on an odd half-sheet of paper.

I have some little skill at catching likenesses, and presently a very fair sketch of my husband's face lay before me.

Then the busy pen went on scratching, guided, I do believe, by the Imp of the Perverse, and a companion portrait appeared.

A girl with a handsome face, and head thrown back defiantly.

I was touching up the lines of the shoulder and neck, when the window was darkened by Edward, who, leaning through the roses and ivy, took the paper from my hand.

"Who are you caricaturing now?" he said. "You surely——"

He stopped short.

Was that look on his face not a faint reflex of the dream-look?

"Who is this?" he asked in quite an altered tone.

A strange sinking at my heart kept me silent for a minute.

Then I said in almost as constrained a voice as his:

"Only a fancy head. I don't know why I drew it."

Did he know I was not telling him the exact truth?

He said no more, only his hands trembled as he picked up the letter I had written, and read it through.

No vision came to me that night, for I never closed my eyes.

That look of my husband's, when he saw the "fancy head" was infinitely more terrible to me than all that had gone before.

For it was real, at least, whatever the dream scene might be; and one fact it established beyond doubt; Winifred was not unknown to him.

There was such a person. And what a light this threw on his conduct! His staying at Calverley—his going out—everything, in fact, that had happened there, now bore a fresh and fearful interpretation.

Calverley was the nearest town like station, and thither we returned next day.

The journey was made hateful by the sense of apartness, which must be felt before the misery of it can be even imagined.

We just missed the Carlisle train we went for; the next did not pass through till ten o'clock, so we had to spend six hours at Calverley. I never saw Edward so annoyed.

"I suppose we must go to the hotel," he said, when his anger showed signs of giving out. "We can't spend half a dozen hours on this confounded platform."

I shuddered when I saw again the place where first my troubles had come upon me.

We had dinner.

"I don't think either of us eat much, and then I said:

"I am going out, Edward."

"Do you wish to go alone?" he asked.

"Not at all."

"I don't feel disposed to go out," he went on, "and you had better not overtire yourself."

"I must go, Edward," I said. "I feel that I cannot stay in the house."

My going was not a mere caprice. I felt that the clue to that dream-tragedy was to be found at Calverley.

Edward's unusual anger had settled that point, and I was determined to make use of this delay which had been forced upon us, walk through and round the place, in the effort to find out something. So out I went. At the door Edward overtook me.

"I don't like your walking alone, Mary," he said. "We ought to keep together."

"You went out alone the last time we were here," I replied, trying to force a laugh, "but I've no objection to your coming with me."

So we walked down the street silently, and a little apart.

"Where are you wandering?" he asked by-and-by.

"I want to see the waterfall by the wooden bridge," I answered, almost involuntarily, looking down as I spoke.

"How do you know there's a wooden bridge here at all?"

"Didn't you tell me so?"

"No,"—very curtly.

"Ah!" with a fine affectation of indifference. "I suppose I must have dreamt it——"

"Did you dream the way there as well?" he asked.

"No, but I'll ask it of this man," and I went up to a passing laborer. "Can you tell me whether there is a wooden bridge over the river, near a waterfall?"

I had felt irresistably impelled to ask the question, but I was hardly prepared for the answer.

"Oh, yes, ma'am. Go straight through the town, and then turn over the stile into the Meads, and follow the path. You can't miss it."

We found the Meads, and over the stile we went.

In a moment I knew that the scene, at least, of my dream was real, for the whole picture was before me exactly as I had seen it.

Then I stopped short, and turned to my husband.

"Come," I said, "and stand by the bridge at that corner."

My mind was made up. Even if eternal parting were to follow, I would tell him now what was in my mind.

"Come, Edward," I repeated, "and stand as I bid you."

"What nonsense" he said; "have you gone mad, Mary?"

"Heaven knows perhaps I have, but stand there you must."

"Anything to humor you," he answered.

His face was white and set; his lips were closed tightly.

Suddenly, before I could begin my tale or ask any questions, his whole face changed—grew glad—the look of misery vanished—fled away.

I followed the direction of his eyes.

Merciful heaven! Was this another dream?

Coming along the path, as I had seen them before, were two figures. The girl whose face I had sketched, and, beside her not Edward; he was standing close to me but Edward's face, his figure, his walk. They drew nearer.

Then my husband sprang toward the other Edward, who made an answering movement, and their right hands clasped each other fast.

I saw nothing more. I suppose I fainted.

* * * * * *

When I came to myself I was on the same sofa in the Calverley Arms which has been mentioned before. Bending over me was the face that had so haunted and tortured me.

"This is our future sister-in-law," said Edward presently, "and my brother is waiting to see you, as soon as you are well enough. It's all right; we'll explain things presently, Mary."

"I didn't know you had a brother," I returned, faintly.

"Oh, well, I have, you see. Will, come and speak to my wife."

That night Edward and I made mutual confessions, and in bitterest shame and humiliation, I sobbed out all my story. Then Edward told his tale, and I learnt that his brother, William Norreys, had been a wild one as well, and such a disgrace to the family that Edward had chosen not to mention him.

His wish to stop at Calverley he could not explain; it was an impulse for which he could not account.

When he went out that first evening he had witnessed that scene between Winifred and his brother, just as I had dreamed it.

The horror of the whole thing had completely unmanned him, and, without waiting to try and rescue the girl, he had turned and torn his way through the brambles and wooly undergrowth.

Had one man stood him good another half minute, he would have seen his brother rush down stream, dash in, and bring the girl to the bank, and then all the agony would have been spared us both. He would never have thought his brother was a murderer" and I shan't never have believed—oh, don't ask me what.

Poor Will's insane jealousy in pushing Winifred into the stream had really been the best advocate of his cause. He very effectually persuaded her of the sincerity of his passion, at any rate, and I believed their betrothal was settled before they had been out of the water three minutes.

The history of their love does not concern this story.

William Norreys was clerk in the factory above mentioned; and this girl was governess in the house of the chief partner, and able to grace her husband's position, when soon after, by the means of substantial help from my husband, he became third partner in the firm.

Will is was only so like Edward in the moonlight.

In the daytime he does not look nearly so handsome.

And how about my dream? There is very little to tell.

I only learned that every time this vision had come to me, my husband had been wholly, vividly awake, and had had the whole scene intensely present before his mind.

Not an explanation? No, I suppose not. Yet one hears now-a-days of all sorts of thought-reading, though my only experience of it took place years ago, before it became fashionable.

THAT state of life is most happy where superfluities are not required, and where necessaries are not wanting.

Ayer's Cathartic Pills contain no calomel, nor any injurious substances whatever. They combine curative vegetable properties only.

Our Young Folks.

CAUGHT BY THE TIDE.

BY PIPKIN.

THERE was no doubt about the sad fact, that Florence Falkirk was an exceedingly naughty girl.

Everything had gone against her in consequence.

She was rude to Auntie Bell, who kept her in after lessons; "sloppy" to her twin sister, Maddy, who offered to share her solitude; and finally had a "tiff" with Harry, who, though a sad tease, was by no means given to resentment, so he invited her to say "Pax," and join him and Charlie Norman, in the delightful occupation of periwinkling.

She would neither help herself, nor would she take charge of baby, so that Maddy might join the party of waders.

Presently the boys got tired of their occupation, and returned to tease the little girls, till Maddy suggested a game by way of diversion.

"I vote for Robinson Crusoe," said Harry; "let's go to the cave."

Maddy hesitated.

"It's such a long way off," she said, "and we've got baby too."

"Never mind that," said Harry. "If she can't walk, we two will make her an arm chair with hands crossed over; but go to the cave we must. It's deadly dull here."

Harry's will was law, except when it clashed with Florry's; so the party set off, with Dan, their retriever, and followed at a distance by Florence, pretending to read, but really thinking deeply.

The fact was, Florry knew quite well the cave was forbidden ground that afternoon, in consequence of the unusually high tide then expected.

She had heard Auntie Bell call out to Harry, with an injunction to keep on the sands near home.

Florence felt convinced Harry had not heard the order, but she was so much in her aunt's black books already, that an extra scolding signified little to her, and the idea of getting the other children into disgrace too struck her as rather pleasant.

The Rocky Cave, the favorite haunt of the little Falkirks, was nearly a mile farther down the shore, and very romantically situated, nestling among the rocks.

Above towered tremendous cliffs, quite inaccessible to climbers; below sheltered a perpendicular wall of granite, some ten feet deep, and the ledge leading into the cave could only be approached by a little narrow path winding up from the shore.

After unheard of difficulties, baby was hoisted up to the ledge and sat down contentedly in the tiny cave as Man Friday, whilst Harry, as Robinson Crusoe, conceded to me insatiable lust for the savages, who performed a wild description of war-dance outside.

At first Florry joined in the game, and offered to represent Man Friday's papa; but a slight disagreement with Norman brought on the ill temper again, and in spite of Maddy's entreaties, she planted herself on the extreme end of the ledge with her feet dangling over, and began to read, with the satisfaction of knowing that her attitude was frightening the whole party.

Evidently the tide was rising very fast that evening.

"We shall have to climb home along the rocks," reflected Florry, peering down. "It must be almost time to start, but I won't tell them till the water come up a little higher. They will get nicely wet, and won't Harry catch it from auntie, for bringing baby out here!"

With such comfortable reflection, Florry went into the cave and sat down in the corner to finish her chapter; but the warmth made her feel drowsy; in a few minutes the book had slipped from her lap, the fair head dropped forward on her chest, and Florry was fast asleep.

And outside, whilst the children played, the sun began to sink beyond the sea, and the treacherous waves came creeping up the shore, till they covered the tiny footpath, cut through the rock, which led up to the Rocky Cave.

Robinson Crusoe was finally caught and demolished by the mock cannibals.

The entertainment wound up in a regular hullabaloo, until at last Harry said—

"It's high time to go home, boys. Just pick up the buckets, will you. What a bother! Here's our largest crab come to life again, and taken himself off out of the bucket to nowhere. I'll go below and look for him whilst you tidy up a bit."

Harry went out, but soon reappeared, running up the path, strangely breathless and pale.

"The tide! the tide! the path is covered up!" was all he could gasp, and it was a few seconds before the others gathered the full meaning of his words.

Then a cry of dismay arose from the whole party, and even Dan, the old dog, mingled his wail of sympathy with theirs.

"Do you think the sea comes right over the cave?" whispered Maddy at last to Harry.

"Not always," said Harry, examining the ground attentively; "but the tides are much higher at this time of year. Gardener told me so."

Maddy turned in despair, and gazed toward the sea.

The clouds were black and lowering and the rising wind whistled round the ledge.

"It's going to be a nasty night," said Harry, "you had better go in and wait."

"Wait! what for?" moaned Maddy, and Harry shivered at the import of her words.

However, Maddy went inside, holding baby's hand, and the children nestled down beside her.

Florry's conduct was unaccountable.

Norman had roused her, and she sat sobbing and wailing, refusing all attempt at comfort, and murmuring to herself, "I did it—I did it—all my fault," till she cried herself quite ill, and then she lay on the ground, perfectly still, but pale and trembling.

"Surely," whispered Maddy, with a faint gleam of hope, "surely they will send out to find us?"

Harry shook his head despondingly.

"Not till too late," he said. "Auntie was to start at four, to meet father. They would not be back till eight. It can only be about five now."

Presently the wind dropped, and the rain came down in torrents.

The water crept slowly by and by, though Maddy did not know it, but said nothing to her sister, and despite of her endeavor to keep awake, she fell into an uneasy sleep.

Already in her dream was the cold water touching her lips, she could neither move nor scream, when a low cry close to her ear aroused her to consciousness once more.

"Hush!" whispered Harry. "Do you hear that?"

Maddy raised her head and listened intently.

It was the quick splashing of oars in the water!

Maddy put baby gently on the ground, and dashed out after Harry on to the ledge.

A simultaneous shout burst from them both.

There was a pause—a silence so intense that Maddy could hear her heart thumping loudly.

Then there came across the water a clear prolonged "Hallo!"

Maddy burst out crying. It was her father's voice.

They were saved!

The boat came gradually into sight, and a few minutes later found Colonel Falkirk standing on the ledge, Baby May in his arms, and the other children clinging to him.

"Thank Heaven!" was all the poor colonel could ejaculate. "Only just in time though. See, the water is already trickling into the cave. Ten minutes more and I should have been too late. We expected the carriage back, he said in reply to Harry's eager questioning, "and not having met you on the cliffs, I knew you must have started off in the opposite direction. But this is no place for explanation."

With more ado, the colonel picked up little Florry, who seemed drowsy and apathetic, and hurried off to the boat, closely followed by the other children, and in a few minutes the whole party were in safety in the boat, the colonel and gardener meanwhile rowing away with a right good will.

Just before rounding the cliff, they turned simultaneously to take one last look.

There was the Rocky Cave in the moonlight distance, and as they gazed, the waves came tearing over the ledge, and one larger than the others raised its foaming head and disappeared into its dark recess.

Maddy shuddered and clasped baby more closely to her.

Mrs. Falkirk received her little flock with open arms; but her joy and thankfulness were marred by Florry's strange appearance and incoherent words.

In great haste the doctor was summoned, and pronounced the child suffering from a severe chill brought on by exposure to the cold and rain, and increased by anxiety of mind.

Many anxious days followed, but gradually the little invalid showed signs of improvement, although her recovery was not rapid till she had eased her mind by confessing to her parents all about her bad temper, and its terrible results.

* * * * * *

On the whole, Florry's illness had done her real good, and the weary hours of convalescence gave her time for serious thoughts and good resolutions.

She is softened and more anxious to please, and if angry thoughts come into her heart, or hasty words to her lips, she pauses sometimes for a moment as she remembers the remorse of her former temper, and the anxious hours they all spent on that eventful night on the rocks.

INTELLECTUAL duties, remarks a noted clergyman, are the outcome of one process of mental culture, which, he holds, may yield one enough knowledge to confuse the moral sense and bewilder the soul's faith. The first effect of culture in its most popular form—scientific knowledge—is to unsettle both and uncharm the souls of men. The remedy for this moral and religious unsettling lies, not in a cowardly retreat from knowledge, but a manful advance into a larger knowledge. The higher up in the scale of humanity a people stands, the profounder its homage to the moral law. Fire the poet or painter or musician with the passion of patriotism, the enthusiasm of humanity, the worship of the infinite and eternal God, and you will get the work which shall prove immortal.

DR. HEALTHIBOY.

BY P. M.

DR. HEALTHIBOY, medical practitioner, had a snug little surgery in a snug little street in the rather quiet town of Dunstones.

His practice, too, was of that kind which might, without impropriety, be called snug also; for the Healthiboys, father and son, had been able to retain all the practice there was in Dunstones.

On the whole, he was a popular sort of person with patients, having the knack with him of chaffing them in a pleasantly professional manner; but people did say that though he might be soft in the chaff, he was, nevertheless, just a little bit hard in the grain.

Still Dr. Healthiboy was by no means a bad sort of fellow.

He had even been known upon occasions (rare ones, it is true) to help in a small way the poorer townspeople; but this was in exceptional January weather, and must, like the season, be taken as merely exceptional.

Generally, when a subscription for anything or anybody was on foot, it somehow happened that the doctor would be on horseback, going a round, or something.

At any rate, he wasn't there when wanted.

At these times he was extremely difficult to come at, was the doctor; and, indeed, it was at all times necessary to make a deep impression on his feelings ere you could hope to make even the shallowest impression on his pocket.

In the little surgery, which we have above designated as snug, Dr. Healthiboy was working late one particular night.

He had been writing at a desk, a solid piece of furniture, which, like its master, might be a trifle hard in the grain too.

The lamp at which the doctor worked had, by this time, burned rather low, so old Healthiboy walked to the window, and let the rays of a moon nearly at its full come freely into the apartment.

It must be confessed that the place under this new illumination began to look rather ghostly, an effect increased by the waning light, which threw a doubtful kind of gloom.

All the glass in the surgery—and there was a good deal of it—came out with surprising distinctness.

Nearly opposite the window stood a high shelf whereon was ranged a goodly row of medicine phials, mostly empty, and of various sorts and sizes.

These all gave back the light from a hundred points; but though the whole crystal row sparkled very much, there was one bottle in particular, a rather wide-mouthed one, that nodded little to fellow, that seemed to shine with a double brilliance.

So at least thought Healthiboy as his eye chanced to wander toward the shelf in question.

And, what is more, when Dr. Healthiboy looked up at the bottle, the bottle seemed to be looking down at Dr. Healthiboy.

The bright points on it twinkled, too, like eyes.

This winking and twinking was rather odd.

The doctor, however, was by no means a man to be flattered by a little extra moonshine.

"Ghosts are moonshine," was a favorite maxim of his.

He never permitted them in his own case, and wouldn't tolerate the ghost of one in a patient.

So the doctor determined to think no more at all about the bottle, or anything that might be in it.

The medicines he had prepared that evening were intended for some of the poorer patients.

They were undoubtedly of a poor sort, whatever the medicines themselves might be.

"They're very poor people, very poor people, very poor people indeed," muttered Healthiboy to himself; "but I'll make 'em pay up for all that."

This was a strictly business remark, and the doctor had very much the looks of a man who is roughly intended business. He had performed also the more seductive task of preparing bills (medicine and attendance) for some of the wealthier patients—a form of prescribing on his own account which he was known particularly to follow.

There now lay before him.

The medicine of his poorer-class customers was all ready, and, the moonlight being clear and strong, Dr. Healthiboy sat down to make a few rough notes.

[illegible] and sputtered a good deal, as though in protest against the barbarous Latin (very dog-Latin indeed) which it was condemned, even in the jovial season, to scrawl down.

The scratching of a bad pen on paper is not a musical sound, but the clinking of glass at most glasses is.

And this was the kind of sound which now caught the doctor's ear.

It was a sharp, clear tinkle, and it made Healthiboy look sharply up from his writing.

Some sportive imp in the bottle must have jostled up against his neighbor, forgetting that he lived in a glass house and would do well to keep quiet.

"They're clinking glasses rather late next door," said the doctor, carelessly, trying not to see anything strange in it all; "but that's other people's business, not mine."

These "other people," whoever they were, seemed fully determined that their business should become his business also—as Dr. Healthiboy soon found out to his cost.

"Sweet spirit of nitre," murmured the doctor, checking off the item.

"Sweet spirit of the season," said something in the bottle, with a kind of musical tinkle.

"Turkey rue," said the doctor, rather louder than before.

"Turkey without rue," said the ghost, also a little louder.

And so whatever the doctor said the imp in the bottle went on interrupting in the rudest possible manner, and altering all the prescriptions, till old Healthiboy got regularly wild, and vowed he'd be homœopathed and pharmacopœia'd if he'd stand much more of it, and used powerful language less professional-sounding, and quite at variance with the spirit of the season.

But though the doctor got redder in the face, and talked louder and stamped more, yet his feelings were coming gradually more into real harmony with the time of the year.

Old Healthiboy was a trifle obstinate, and it took him just a little while to come round.

But he did come round all right in the end.

"Hang it all!" said the doctor, suddenly, coming out of his chair with a bound; "I must be! If I don't change all the prescriptions! Let me see. Widow Wantwage, two quartern loaves; Old Outwork and the boy, three pounds of beef; and the Downouthuroucks shall have half a ham. Sweet spirit of the season, though, continued the doctor; "rather a fine name to call himself by, that imp in the bottle! Don't think I ever prescribed out of that bottle before. Never mind; the new medicines will do quite as much good as the old. At any rate, they won't do any more harm."

And Dr. Healthiboy was right—they didn't.

THE WEAPON OF WOMEN.—The man who had sneered at the limitation of woman's dress has certainly never properly considered the matter. It is true she is hampered by clinging skirts, by "ribbons and bibbons on every side," that she has no pockets and that she knows nothing of the freedom of a waistcoat without sleeves beneath; yet for all these disadvantages she finds a compensation in the valuable hairpin.

Her masculine companion carries a pocketful of knives, forks, hooks, and so on, with which to perform the thousand little mechanical tricks needful to a peaceful civilized existence. She, on the other hand, looks each emergency, be it great or trifling, fearlessly in the face, and with ready hand plucks from amid her tresses the faithful little loop of wire, and is ready to encounter whatever comes. A woman without hairpins is like a ship without a sail; she drifts hopelessly at the mercy of untoward circumstances, without faith in herself or resource upon which to depend. With this simple assistance she is a match for the universe.

With a hairpin she buttons her boots and fastens her gloves, opens her letters and cuts the magazines; with it she pokes and hooks, picks and snatches, pulls and pushes. Scores of intricate operations for which a man would find it necessary to employ as many instruments as adorn the torture chamber of a dentist, are disposed of by a limber-wristed young woman with a few turns of a hairpin, before her brother has had time to hunt up his tool chest.

We should like to see a profound and exhaustive essay from the pen of some of the leaders of the woman movement upon the political, ethical and intellectual influence of the hairpin, for we believe its importance as a factor in the problem of female development has never been properly considered. The way to the ballot box may lie through its slender arch, and in any case it is a woman's weapon against an adverse world.

THE ORIGIN OF THE SEXES.—The explanation given by Aristophanes of the origin of the sexes, though it hardly accords with the usually accepted view, has at any rate the merit of originality. "Once upon a time," says the poet, "a man had three sexes and a double nature; besides this, he was perfectly round, and had four hands and four feet, one head with two faces looking opposite ways, set on a single neck. When these creatures pleased, they could walk as we do now, but if they wanted to go faster they would roll over with all their four legs in the air, like a tumbler turning somersaults; and their pride and strength were such that they made war upon the gods. Jupiter resented their insolence, but hardly liked to kill them with thunderbolts, as the gods would thus lose their services.

At last he hit upon a plan.

"I will cut them in two," he said, "so that they will walk on two legs instead of four. They will then be only half as strong, but twice as numerous, and we shall get twice as many services."

This was done, and the two halves are continually going about looking for one another. "If we mortals," says Aristophanes, with an air of apprehension, "are not obedient to the gods, there is danger that we shall be split up again, and shall have to go about in a fresco-relievo, like those figures with only half a nose, which you may see sculptured on our columns."

DRIFTING.

In blissful quietness afloat
  Drifting slow with the ebbing tide,
Two of us in a dainty boat—
  I and my blithesome bride.

Good and true was my bonnie bride,
  As a look in her blue eyes told;
Bending, I kissed the forehead wide
  Where rippled soft waves of gold.

A picture rare looked she that night
  In her robe of silvery sheen,
That glimmered in the moon's pale light;
  None fair as my love, I ween.

Alas! 'tis many a year ago
  Since we floated down with the tide;
I'm old and bent, with hair like snow,
  And gone is my blithesome bride.

My darling's face was calm and sweet,
  As she whispered her last "farewell,"
And "it won't be long—a little while"—
  Then closed her eyes, with peaceful smile.

And drifted out on death's dark tide,
  To the haven where she waits for me;
My sweet, my love, my angel bride,
  I would die for a glimpse of thee!

I feel to-night "it won't be long,"
  Ere the soft plash of waves I hear;
Then, launching forth, with joyful song,
  I'll drift till the shore draws near.

Till I hear the blessed angels sing,
  Till I see my true love once more,
And hear her joyous welcoming
  From the verge of the golden shore.

ABOUT DWARFS.

Homer has told us how the pigmies fought the cranes; Strabo has described the difference between two pigmy races—the one five spans high, and the other only three. Ctesias is grave, and Otis is gay, concerning them.

Nearly all the writers of antiquity bring forth from their brooding and prolific fancy races so diminutive as to rival the Liliputs of Lemuel Gulliver.

The Egyptians are said to have had dwarfs in attendance on their princes. The Romans, in the degeneracy of the Empire, not satisfied with the dwarfs which Nature presented, made it a trade to produce dwarfs by the use of bandages and confinement in boxes, so as to hinder the natural growth. Domitian had a company of dwarf gladiators. Tiberius had a dwarf in whom he tolerated great license of speech, and who was almost as cruel as his master.

Julia, the niece of Augustus, had a little dwarfish fellow, called Canopas, whom she set great store by; he was not above two feet and a half high. A freed maid of Julia was of the same height.

Pliny tells of the knights of Rome, Marius Maximus and Marcus Tullius, who were two feet eleven inches high, "and, in truth," says he, "we ourselves have seen their bodies as they lay embalmed."

Another ancient writer states that, "in the time of Theodosius, there was seen in Egypt a pigmy so small of body that he resembled a partridge; yet did he exercise the functions of a man, and could sing tunably."

Antonius had a dwarf who was not more than two feet high, and Augustus Cæsar exhibited in his plays a young man who weighed no more than seventeen pounds. Ælyplus, the excellent logician of Alexandria, is said to have been only one foot five inches high.

Calvus, the orator, who contended with Cicero, was remarkable for the smallness of his stature. The Turks, as well as the Romans, had their famous dwarfs. They were purchased at an immense expense for the amusement of the Ottoman Emperors, and sometimes did good service.

Charaeus, the wisest counsellor of the East, was not three feet high; neither was Uladislaus, of Poland, who fought more battles, and achieved more brilliant victories, than any of his predecessors. Dantlow, who was thirty inches high, and deprived of his arms, wrote Latin and Russ with his left foot, and by the same means made pen-and-ink drawings of no mean kind.

Giants show us the work of Nature written in text hand; dwarfs are her smallest penmanship, but no less complete and elegant than the others.

Among comparatively modern dwarfs we may notice Jeffery Hudson. He was born in 1619, at Latham, in Rutlandshire, England. His father was a butcher, stout and corpulent of frame; his mother also was of ordinary stature. At eight years old Jeffery was not half a yard in height, and was taken by the Duchess of Buckingham, who clothed him in satin.

At a splendid feast given by the duke, there was a cold pie, which, being opened, Jeffery started up in complete armor. Soon after this incident he was presented to Queen Henrietta Maria.

"It was a strange contrast," says an old writer, "to see him and the king's gigantic porter, William Evans. In a masque at court, Evans lugged out of one pocket a long loaf, and little Jeffery, instead of a piece of cheese, out of the other!"

Jeffery was a favorite of the queen, and consequently drew on himself the attention of the court and the public. In the castle of Petworth, in the county of Sussex, there is a fine picture by Vandyke, representing Jeffery standing beside the queen. At the beginning of the civil war he was appointed captain in the royal army.

In 1644, in consequence of a quarrel with a person of the name of Crofts, he challenged his enemy to mortal combat. Crofts duly made his appearance, but his only weapon was a large syringe. A real duel avenged the second insult, and Jeffery, at the first fire, shot his adversary through the heart.

Jeffery, on one occasion, was taken prisoner by a Flemish pirate, and the story of his captivity is celebrated by Sir William Davenant in a poem entitled, "Jeffreides." On the restoration of the royal family, Jeffery again appeared at court. He died in 1682, at the age of sixty-three; he was then in prison, charged with some political offence.

The dwarfs with which the public have been the most familiar are those which have been publicly exhibited. One of the most interesting of this class was Nannetta Stocker, a native of Austria, who was exhibited as a dwarf in the early part of this century. She was two feet nine inches in height, very intellectual, and had great skill on the piano.

But no modern dwarf has excited so much interest as General Tom Thumb. This miniature man, perfectly formed, graceful in every movement, shrewd and witty, obtained a hold on public patronage such as no other show dwarf has ever achieved.

Dwarfs are usually regarded as purely matters of curiosity. Their conformation and history, however, are of immense importance to physiologists; the cause of dwarfism is still involved in obscurity, and is probably to be found in nothing more than what we commonly designate as a freak of nature.

Grains of Gold.

Circumstance is the occasion of vice.

Patience is bitter, but its fruit is very sweet.

Beware of the solemn deceivings of thy very desires.

He who acts his strength is strong, and will be stronger.

Every duty we omit obscures some truth we should have known.

At twenty years of age the will reigns, at thirty the wit, at forty the judgment.

The longest life will seem short when we look back upon it from the threshold of eternity.

There is no political alchemy by which you can get golden conduct out of leaden instincts.

To reach the height of our ambition is like trying to reach the rainbow; as we advance, it recedes.

Love is good and does good wondrously without thinking about it, and without in reality knowing it.

The end of philosophy is the attainment of happiness, and the means it employs are rules for virtuous conduct.

Strict punctuality is perhaps the cheapest virtue that can give force to an otherwise utterly insignificant character.

The tender warning voices of our guardian angels are ever striving to hush the siren tones of the tempting world.

We are sent into this world to make it better and happier; and in proportion as we do so, we make ourselves both.

Ten thousand of the greatest faults in our neighbors are of less consequence to us than one of the smallest in ourselves.

As continued health is vastly preferable to the happiest recovery from illness, so is innocence superior to the truest repentance.

The reason why we find so many dark places in the Bible is, for the most part, because there are so many dark places in our hearts.

If it be my lot to crawl, I will crawl contentedly; if to fly, I will fly with alacrity; but as long as I can avoid it, I will never be unhappy.

Character cannot grow in the dark: it needs the brightening and vitalizing influences of intelligence to develop it into fulness and richness.

Wrong-doing is a road that may open fair, but leads to trouble and danger. Well-doing, however rough and thorny at first, surely leads to pleasant places.

Femininities.

A "Home for Weary Women" is a New York idea.

The new town of Dunsmith, D. T., offers $100 and a town lot to the first boy baby born in that place.

Paregoric is the newest handkerchief perfume. Old maids like it. It is so suggestive of extreme youth.

It must be admitted that scandals are usually caused by pretty girls, but this doesn't console the homely ones.

Several white girls have embarked in the laundry business in Boulder, Col., since the Chinese have been driven out.

You often hear of a man being in advance of his age, but you never hear of a woman being in the same predicament.

"Mother, there was a dead mouse in the milk-pail." Mother—"Well, didn't you take it out?" "No, I threw the cat in."

Rag-man—"Got any old things you want to get rid of?" Smith—"What are you paying for mothers-in-law this morning?"

"A chair of matrimony is talked of at Vassar College." Of course it will be a big rocking-chair strong enough to hold two.

"Kiss the baby while you can," admonishes a new poet. We can kiss her just as well fifteen or twenty years from now—if she's that kind of a baby."

Small dogs, pursuant to the Paris fashions, should be clothed this season in plush, velvet, or cloth, with a pheasant or rabbit embroidered on the garment.

"Now, what is woman's duty in home missions?" asked a female lecturer; and a little girl in the back seat piped out: "Stay at home and help pa 'tend baby."

Every Frenchwoman has three wedding dresses. The first is for the civil marriage, the second for the contract signing, and the third for the religious ceremony.

Grandame Marion Woods lived to be 103 years old, to die violently at last; for the good woman fell out of a window, at Indianapolis, a few days ago, and was killed.

"Oh, mamma, mamma!" said a little girl the other day, as she saw a chicken without any feathers on his tail, "that old hen has lost the ribbons out of her polonaise."

The rage now in Paris is to be married at midnight. This is a wise move. It accustoms the bride to waiting up until "the wee sma' hours" for her husband's return.

Dear friend C'arn (looking at Bell's photograph)—"What a lovely picture!" Bell—"Do you really think it looks like me?" Dear friend Clara—"Oh, no, dear—not a particle!"

A Santa Cruz woman, aged forty, has brought a breach of promise suit in the sum of $20,000 against a gay deceiver of 63 summers. The plaintiff has already had two husbands.

A sentimental soul says that a kiss is "the meeting of two souls." This pretty metaphor is sadly shattered when a third pair, on the loo of the girl's father, puts in a sudden appearance.

Two women in Florence, Kansas, ate arsenic, recently, under the impression that it would improve their complexion. It didn't, and it was only by prompt medical aid that their lives were saved.

A little girl of two and a half years burned her finger for the first time the other day. She placed her finger on a hot potato, and suddenly drew it back, exclaiming, "Oh! der's a pin in it!"

A woman's exchange is an enterprise which is talked of for Plainfield, N. J. The object is to afford a place where women can bring the products of their hands and have them sold without any publicity.

It has been estimated that the time thrown away in this world in courting the girl you want to marry, and who is ready to marry you, would build all the railroads, bridges, tunnels, factories and public buildings.

A lightning artist has secured a photograph of a pistol bullet in its flight. He will next try to catch a shadow of a man's week's salary when his wife, desirous of a new bonnet, has got the wealth in her possession.

Young housewife (consulting with cook about the dinner for a party)—"As a second course, we will have eel." "How much ought I to get, ma'am." Young wife—"I fancy about ten yards will be sufficient."

Maud—"Isn't it a queer title for a book, mother, 'Not Like Other Girls?' I wonder what she can be if she is not like other girls?" Mother—"I don't know, unless she goes into the kitchen and helps her mother, instead of staying in the parlor to read novels."

Miss Auster, the famous novelist of long ago, occasionally said a sharp thing, and here is a specimen: "We occasionally find a woman," she remarks, "in whom the sense of taste is so acutely developed that she never fails to detect a flavor of lard in her neighbor's pastry."

Mamie—"How can Lucille marry that old fossil, Clonefist? What if he is so rich?" Sadie—"Do you know that he has heart disease so badly that the slightest shock is liable to prove fatal?" Mamie—"Ah, that's it." Sadie—"Yes, and Lucille thinks she will be able to shock him."

When a man says his "wife is worth her weight in gold," if she weighs 120 pounds she is worth just an even $30,000. So it is not such an extravagant saying, after all. There are millions of homes—even humble cottages—where the wife and mother is valued much more highly than her weight in gold.

"This is my last birthday," said a handsome girl to her adorer, on the 20th of August. "What do you mean?" he exclaimed, clutching at his heart. "You are not going to die, are you?" "Well, I should hope not. I'm twenty-one to-day, and a woman never has a birthday after that, you know." He remembered then that they didn't.

Masculinities.

A great many more people are disappointed in marriage than in love.

"What I Told My Wife," is the title of a new book. It is almost needless to say that it is fiction.

All the great forces in nature are silent forces, but you couldn't make a hen-pecked husband believe it.

Cigars have been known only about 70 years. This is probably what makes some of them smell so.

The young man who desires to get up with the sun, should not stay up too late with the daughter.

The Czar of Russia may fear men, but he is not afraid of fleas. He lets his dog sleep on his bed every night.

A wit, in speaking of an impecunious friend, said: "He settles his debts just like clockwork—tick, tick, tick!"

It is all well enough to preach "peace on earth and good will to men," but no man can feel that way with a boil on his nose.

There are men so anxious to be miserable that they will go out and pledge their happiness as security on which to borrow trouble.

In friendship, we see only the faults which may injure our friends. In love we only see the faults by which we ourselves suffer.

Mr. Oldbeau (to young rival, before young lady to whom they are both attentive): "Why, bless me, Charlie, how you've grown!"

Two stupid Michigan hunters shot a woman, mistaking her for a bear. A woman should never be mistaken for anything but a dear.

The bones of the average man only weigh about twenty-four pounds, and yet some people put on airs and step around as though they weighed a ton.

The English language contains over 130,000 words, and yet when a man wishes to stop a street-car, he cannot think of anything better to say than "Hi!"

Fifth avenue, 11 a. m.—"Maw'n, ole fel'r." "Maw'n dear boy." "Nice maw'n." "Beastly nice." "Maw'n." "Maw'n." They crawl apart.

A "spotted addet" is what they call a defaulting cashier in Boston. Returns from the detective agencies, though, show that a great many of them are unspotted.

A Nevada hunter spent three months looking for a grizzly bear, and the man's relatives have spent three months looking for him. They think he must have found the bear.

"Why does marriage make men thoughtful?" asked a young lady of an old bachelor. "Well, I suppose it is because they are continually wondering what is going to happen next."

About twenty young men of Newton, Kan., have formed a club having for its purpose the lessening of the expense attached to living. They expect to make it for about $3 a week.

A girl at Memphis, Tenn., has horsewhipped her prospective father-in-law for endeavoring to induce his son to break off the match. This looks just a little like a solemn warning for the young man.

"I have been unfortunate in love matters," said a well-known bass singer at the Paris opera, the other day. "My first sweetheart entered a convent, death robbed me of the second, and the third—is now my wife."

One of the simpletons who bother the attendants in public libraries is said to have actually made the following request: "I don't recollect the title of the book I want, but there was a remarkable passage in the last part which I should remember if I saw it."

Two hundred persons were present at a wedding, recently, and partook of a cake made by the bride, who could speak several languages, and was otherwise talented. Two days later the leading druggist in the neighborhood sold all the "dyspepsia cure" he had in his shop.

"Are you at all æsthetic in your tastes?" she asked, in a sprightly manner, as she moved towards the piano. "Well, a little," he answered; "I am æsthetical to the extent of having an admiration for moving songs." There is now a deep gulf between them which nothing can bridge.

"Did she have presence of mind sufficient to thank you for your effort to save her from falling?" said one gentleman to another who made a feeble effort to catch a lady while she was falling, having stepped upon a treacherous banana-peel. "Oh, yes," replied he, "and I got a bit of it, too."

Young wife (new to marketing): "You may send a saddle of mutton for dinner." Butcher—"Yes, ma'am. What kind will it be?" Young wife (thoughtfully)—"Well, as my husband is away, and there is no one in the house but mother and myself and the two servant girls, you had better send a side-saddle, I think."

The following advertisement recently appeared: "Being aware that it is indelicate to advertise for a husband, I refrain from doing so; but if any gentleman should be inclined to advertise for a wife, I will answer the advertisement without delay. I am young, have a good figure, am domesticated, and considered handsome. Apply, etc."

"Mother," said a young wife, "would you mind cooking the dinner to-day? It would please John, I know. He complains so much of the new girl that I shall discharge her the moment I can get another." "Certainly," replied the old lady, cordially. At dinner John said to his wife: "Mary, that new girl seems to be getting worse and worse every meal she prepares."

A Texas doctor gives an account of the ease with which doctors are made in that State. He took a six-hour ride with a Texan villager, who asked him a great many questions about the remedies used for certain diseases then prevailing in the locality. On the following week he had occasion to visit a neighboring village, where he found his recent companion with his shingle out as a full-fledged doctor. He had graduated in that six-mile ride.

IN THE SUN.

'Fore winter's blast the summer flowers fly
They blow alone when balmy zephyrs play—
We vainly seek their fragrance fled, or sigh
For blossoms care while King Frost holds his sway.

How many smile if fame and riches die,
Like those who flee when sorrow passeth nigh;
E'en birds of sunshine they that know no love,
But ever seek the bright, tho' unknown sky.

—WM. MACKINTOSH.

Her Own Choice.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

"GIVE up waltzing?" said Rosalind Shirley. "Not I, indeed. And bid adieu to all my delightful private theatricals, when my new dress for 'Lady Teazle' is just finished, and the cards are out for Mrs. St. Aubyn's? Dear me, what does the man take me for?"

Miss Elma Shirley, the aunt and guardian (nominally speaking, for Rosalind had taken the curb between her own teeth ever since she was ten years old) of the young lady, looked pained and puzzled.

"My dear," said she, "you must learn to submit yourself to your husband."

"But he isn't my husband, Aunt Elma!"

"He will be, Rosalind."

"I'm not so certain of that," retorted the girl, with a rebellious straightening of the small, slim figure, and an ominous scintillation of the great hazel eyes. "I don't mean to put myself in the power of any masculine tyrant alive. I've had my own way for eighteen years, and I don't propose to give it up now."

Miss Elma burst into weak tears.

"Oh, dear, dear!" she faltered, "what is to be the end of all this, Rosalind?"

"A declaration of independence," gayly answered the girl,

"You'll lose the best match of the season," sighed Aunt Elma.

"He is handsome," owned Rosalind, "and he's rich. And he's very nice, too, is Ferdinand Alcott, when he chooses to behave himself. But when once he begins to make a Bluebeard of himself——"

And saucy Rosalind snapped her pink fingers in the air as a general signal of defiance and insubordination.

She sat down and wrote a pretty little scented note to her love.

"DEAR FERDY,—I shall do as I please. Yours, disobediently, "ROSALIND."

Mr. Alcott smiled a little over this compound of violet ink and otter of roses.

"She don't mean it," said he to himself.

And so he bought a ticket for Mrs. St. Aubyn's great charity bazaar, the proceeds of which were to go to an "Asylum for Widowed Women," and went thither.

But when he saw his pretty fiancee in pink satin, with powdered hair and a huge spangled fan, as 'My Lady Teazle,' his brows contracted sternly.

"This amounts to open defiance," said he.

And he never even smiled, when Rosalind flashed a roguish glance at him from behind the sparkling folds of the monster fan.

She flitted up to him when the music stage was removed, and dancing had begun.

"Are you very much aggravated?" said she.

"I am deeply annoyed, Rosalind," answered he. "A girl who openly scorns the opinions and ideas of the man who——"

"Awful, isn't it?" interposed Miss Shirley. "Sorry I can't stay to hear the conclusion of that grand remark. Here comes Bobby Singleton to dance with me."

He bowed coldly, and stepped aside. The color mounted into Rosalind's cheek as she saw the expression of his eyes. For a second she hesitated whether to cry out—

"Ferdinand, I love you! And in the name of that love, I renounce all that would grieve or annoy your leal heart!"

It was but for a second, however. As the band struck up a merry waltzing air from "La Fille de Madame Angot" she put her hand on Mr. Singleton's shoulder, and whirled merrily away.

Mr. Alcott looked after her for a minute, and then put on his hat and went home.

When Rosalind came down to breakfast the next morning, a letter lay at the side of her plate. She broke the seal and read it, with a slight deepening of the roses on her cheeks.

"Just as I expected," said she to Aunt Elma, who was wistfully watching the expression of her face. "I'm a free young woman once more. Mr. Alcott has been so obliging as to give me back my troth!"

"Oh, Rosalind!"

"It's just as well," said Rosalind, crumpling up the note, and beginning to pour cream into her coffee cup; "perhaps better. I'm one of the birds that can't endure a cage. I must be a free agent, or I should cut my throat!"

"Oh, my dear!" sighed aunt Elma. "And he's so rich!"

"The cage would be just as intolerable, aunty dear, if it was gilded!"

"And so nice!"

"No one is nice, who would make a despot of himself. Come, Aunt Elma, give me some muffins, and let's forget this Grand Mogul who would cut every human soul down to the measure of his own pattern!"

"I thought you loved him my dear."

"So I do—I mean—so I did!" corrected Rosalind. "But don't you see, Aunt Elma that we've wiped out all that account on our slate, and we're going to begin again."

The next day Rosalind Shirley accepted an invitation from an old schoolmate to spend a month with her in Devonshire, and by the time she returned the wheel of Fate had accomplished a new revolution.

"Lost everything!" said Aunt Elma, lifting up both her white, wrinkled hands. "At least, everything but that farm in Cambridgeshire. And he brought up as if he owned Aladdin's lamp. Isn't it a blessing, Rosalind, that you broke it, you dream," said Miss Shirley, quietly, "if it is Mr. Alcott you are thinking of."

"Of course it is Mr. Alcott," said Aunt Elma, with an injured air. "Jenkyns & Co. have failed, with all his prosperity in their hands. Dear, dear, what an uncertain world this is, to be sure!"

Rosalind went on arranging flowers in a slender necked Bohemian glass, but her hands trembled and presently she pushed the glass away.

"I am only spoiling these rosebuds," said she. "I—I think I'll go out into the fresh air a little."

It was a dreary March twilight, with snowflakes eddying vaguely through the air, and a sad-voiced wind sighing. All day long Ferdinand Alcott had been working at his accounts, trying to see if some little remnant could not be secured from the vanished wealth that had once been his. But all the long columns of figures answered with the same story—he must be content with the portion of the poor man all the rest of his days.

He pushed back his chair, looking sadly into the room. Stop! A voice! Was it his fancy, wandering back into what was past and gone for ever, or was it in reality the soft, musical ring of Rosalind Shirley's accents?

He was not long in suspense, for the next instant a tap came to the door, and the farmer's wife presented herself.

"Company for Mr. Alcott," said she. "A lady."

Aunt Rosalind Shirley, in violet cashmere and silver-gray furs, walked into the room with very red cheeks and laughing lips that belied the moisture in her eyes.

"Ferdinand," she said, "I've been a very naughty girl, and I'll promise never to do so again. Dear Ferdinand, only take me back into your heart, and I'll never waltz again, nor go near a private theatrical?"

He smiled, but there was the rigid look of pain still around his lips.

"That is all past, Rosalind," said he, with a sob in his throat. "Heaven knows how dearly I love, sweetheart, but I am a beggar, now, and all must be over between us."

"Must it?" said Rosalind, sitting down beside his chair; "but I say it must not! Here I am, and here I intend to stay, so you may as well send for a clergyman at once."

"Rosalind!"

But she only answered with tears and sobs.

"My love! my love! let me stay! Don't send me away from you again!"

So it was all arranged, and there was a simple wedding from the old farmhouse at the village church.

"Remember, love," said Ferdinand Alcott as they went back to the farm, "you have cast your lots with a poor man."

"It's my own choice," said Rosalind, saucily. "I always did make a point of having my own way, if you remember, Mr. Alcott. You shall write books and I paint pictures, and I'll be housekeeper in this delightful old-fashioned place."

Then it came to pass that a star vanished out of the world of show and fashion, and people shook their heads, and talked of how well Rosalind Shirley might have done.

But Mrs. Alcott, living down at her farm, would not have changed her lot with that of a princess.

HERE is a rough tariff obtained from an employment agency of the wages of various grades of help in California: Cooks, $240 to $720 a year; nurses, $180 to $360; housemaids $180 to $300; coachmen, $360 to $720; butlers, $600 to $900; Chinese cooks and general servants, $240 to $420. Even a child of fourteen cannot be hired as nurse under $120 a year.

A "Madman's" Legacy.

"Sire!" exclaimed a man in the homely garb of a mechanic to Richelieu, Prime minister of France, as he was entering his palace; "Sire, I have made a discovery "which shall make rich and great the nation which shall develop it. Sire, will "you give me an audience?"

Richelieu, constantly importuned, finally ordered the "madman" imprisoned. Even in jail he did not desist from declaring his "delusion," which one day attracted the attention of a British nobleman, who heard De Caune's story, and developed his discovery of steam power!

All great discoveries are at first derided.

Seven years ago a man yet under middle age, enriched by a business which covered the continent, found himself suddenly stricken down. When his physicians said recovery was impossible, he used a new discovery, which, like all advances in science, had been opposed bitterly by the schoolmen. Nevertheless, it cured him, and out of gratitude therefor he consecrated a part of his wealth to the spreading of its merits before the world. Such in brief is the history of Warner's safe cure, which has won according to the testimony of eminent persons, the most deserved reputation ever accorded to any known compound, and which is finally winning on its merits alone the approval of the most conservative practitioners. Its fame now belts the globe.—*The Herald.*

Recent Book Issues.

The Emporia (Fla.,) Gazette is sending to the press of the country samples of mistletoe, found native there. A branch will be sent to anyone for ten cents in postage.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The Century for December is notable for the variety and exceeding interest of its articles and the profuseness and rare beauty of finish of its illustrations. There are five illustrated articles; one being a war paper by Mark Twain, entitled The Private History of a Campaign that Failed, being an account of the author's personal experience as a rebel. Another, by Captain Ericsson, their famous inventor is about The Monitors, and is accompanied by a paper on, The Loss of the Monitor, by a survivor. In a beautifully illustrated article, S. G. W. Benjamin gives an interesting sketch of The City of Teheran. An American Lordship is by G. P. Lathrop, and the illustrated paper is on The 'Lamia' by Keats, and the illustrations of Will H. Low. Dr. Waldstein, the well-known young American lecturer on Greek Art, at Cambridge, England, contributes a paper on The Lesson of Greek Art, in which he shows the necessity and the possible means of educating the people in art. An article on Mrs. Helen Jackson (H. H.) contains the fullest account yet published of the life of that gifted writer, with a frontispiece portrait, and a group of her last poems. A readable article on Our Ex-President is furnished by Senator Edmunds and others. There are two good short stories, by H. H. Boyesen and T. A. Janvier, and a continuation of Mary Hallock Foote's novel begun in the November number, John Bodewin's Testimony. There are several other articles of equal merit, good poems, and the usual admirably filled departments. The Century Co., New York.

The Christmas number of *St. Nicholas* bristles with holiday features from the opening poem, The Little Christmas-tree, to the amusing pictures on the last page. Santa Claus on a Lark, is the suggestive title of a story by Washington Gladden, illustrated by Sol Eytinge. Christmas Before Last, is a whimsically humorous tale by Frank R. Stockton, illustrated; Through the Register, is a middle-aged little folks' Christmas story. Our Holiday Party, tells of a party of the holidays, and contains clever suggestions. Other timely contributions of a holiday flavor are by Mary Hallock Foote, Grace Denio Litchfield, and Edith M. Thomas. Features of the number are chapters of Mrs. Burdett's new serial, Little Lord Fauntleroy; My Echo, a charming poem by Edgar Fawcett, illustrated; and two articles on Rugby—one on the School-Life, by Elizabeth Robins Pennell, the other telling of a Vacation Visit, by Elwin D. Mead; both copiously illustrated. The New Bits of Talk for Young Folks, by H. H. are continued; Chopin is the subject of the From Bach to Wagner papers; and Among the Law-Makers contains an account of an amusing interview between the page and President Grant. There are literary and artistic contributions from other prominent authors and artists. The frontispiece is from a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The Century Co., New York.

The frontispiece in the December number of *Cassell's Family Magazine* illustrates The Song of an English Girl. The illustrations throughout this number are as profuse as usual, and as finely executed. The two serials are brought to a satisfactory close. The number is notable for its short stories: How I Got My Telephone for Nothing; Dickens' Wife; and Inklesfoil; An Alpine Village Story. An interesting paper with illustrations describes the Early Home of Florence Nightingale, and a very pretty home it was. The papers on Remunerative Employment For Gentlewomen are continued. There are many instructive articles, much matter of special home interest; the Family Doctor prescribes for the inner man, and the Paris correspondent tells us what to do with the outer man. The Gatherer is as usual filled with useful information, and poetry gives a light touch to the pages. The January number will begin a new volume of this, one of the best of family magazines. Cassell & Co., New York; $1.50 a year.

The Sanatarian for December among other excellent articles has the following: Contagious Diseases Propagated by Rags and the Necessity of Disinfection; The Action of Disinfectants on Microzoids; Milk Food; Health of the United States Army; Railway Accident Statistics; Sanitary Inspection of a House; Influence of Marriage on Cholera; The Contents of Children's Minds, Care of the Teeth; The Origin, Work, and Present Position of the National Board of Health; etc., etc. Published 113 Fulton St., New York.

BAD DOG.—There is a queer story of a dog, named Jack, who lives in New Jersey. Jack learned to drink beer, getting his supply from the drippings of some too convenient beer faucets. He kept this up a long time and finally become a confirmed drunkard. Then his master got another dog to watch the establishment, and, curiously enough, Jack immediately began to reform, and is to-day as sober and bright a dog as can be found anywhere. There are a good many men who would be far better off if they followed this canine example.

"How you been brudder Ben?" "Me, lor sister Charity, I been poorly sure's you borned, I is! wid the rheumatis a creeping all about same as a tame snake." "Chile, buy a bottle dem Salvation Oil dey cure sartin, en only costs a quarter."

R. R. R.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF

The Cheapest and Best Medicine for Family Use in the World.

CURES AND PREVENTS

Colds, Coughs, Sore Throat, Influenza, Inflammation, Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Headache, Toothache, Asthma, DIFFICULT BREATHING.

CURES THE WORST PAINS
In from one to 20 minutes.
NOT ONE HOUR
After reading this advertisement need any one
SUFFER WITH PAIN.

Radway's Ready Relief is a Cure for every Pain, Sprains, Bruises, Pains in the Back, Chest or Limbs.
It was the first,
AND IS THE ONLY PAIN REMEDY!
That instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays Inflammation, and cures Congestions, whether of the lungs, stomach, bowels, or other glands or organs, by one application.
If seized with threatened

PNEUMONIA,

or any Inflammation of the internal organs or mucous membranes, after exposure to cold, wet etc., lose no time, but apply Radway's Ready Relief on a piece of flannel over the part affected with congestion or inflammation; this simple but effective treatment will in nearly every case check the inflammation and cure the patient, and prevent what otherwise might be a serious disease. For further instructions, see our directions wrapped around the bottle.

A half to a teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will in a few minutes cure cramps, spasms, sour stomach, heartburn, nervousness, sleeplessness, sick headache, diarrhœa, dysentery, colic, flatulency and all Internal Pains.

Travelers should always carry a bottle of **RADWAY'S READY RELIEF** with them. A few drops in water will prevent sickness or pains from change of water. It is better than French Brandy or Bitters as a stimulant.

MALARIA

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Whether transmitted from parents or acquired, is within the curative range of the SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

Cures have been made where persons have been afflicted with Scrofula from their youth up to 20, 30 and 40 years of age, by

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A remedy composed of ingredients of extraordinary medical properties, essential to purify, heal, repair and invigorate the broken-down and wasted body. QUICK, PLEASANT, SAFE AND PERMANENT in its treatment and cure.

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Perfectly Tasteless, elegantly coated with sweet gum, purge, regulate, purify, cleanse, and strengthen.

DR. RADWAY'S PILLS for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Loss of Appetite, Headache, Costiveness, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals or deleterious drugs.

Price, 25 cts. per box. Sold by all druggists.

DYSPEPSIA.

DR. RADWAY'S PILLS are a cure for this complaint. They restore strength to the stomach, and make it perform its functions. The symptoms of Dyspepsia disappear, and with them the liability of the system to contract diseases. Take the medicine according to directions, and observe what we say in "False and True" respecting diet.

Read "FALSE AND TRUE."

Send a letter stamp to **DR. RADWAY & CO., 32 Warren Street, New York,** for "False and True."

TO THE PUBLIC.

Be sure and ask for RADWAY'S, and see that the name RADWAY is on what you buy.

Facetiæ.

PARTING.

Parting—the very word recalls
The bitterest memories of the heart,
When lips that we have loved in vain
Frame the sad sentence, "We must part."

I gazed upon the face I loved—
Upon that fair and open brow;
I heard the ceiling of the bell—
Ah! must I make the parting now?

The clock has struck the fatal hour
When I must choose, whate'er betide,
I seized my ivory brush and comb
And made the parting down the side!

—U. N. Noxe.

A current event—Jelly-making.

A boatman's epitaph—Life is oar.

Can a tailor's nag properly be called a clothes-horse?

Favorable weather for hay-making—When it rains pitchforks.

Shooting boots are extensively advertised. Shooting boots are probably those fired at cats.

"It is so cold in Sweden," said a returned traveler, "that in winter I invariably put on my gloves to wash with."

An exchange, in a headline, speaks of "A Seeming Fraud." Probably a reference to some new kind of sewing-machine.

An old lady was recently heard to observe, on taking up the morning paper, "I wonder if anybody has been born that I know?"

Student (to servant at the door)—"Miss Brown?" Servant—"She's engaged." Student—"I know it. I'm what she's engaged to."

A new-fashioned shade of gray is called "frightened mouse." Probably the complementary color will be entitled "pursuing cat."

A Western newspaper speaks of a man who was "shot by his fireside." He must have mixed natural gas with the old favorite oil-can.

What did the West-end chiropodist mean when he advertised that he had "removed corns from several of the crowned heads of Europe?"

"A genuine patriot," said an election orator, recently, "must at all times be ready to die for his country, even though it should cost him his life!"

An exchange says that a folded newspaper placed under the coat in the small of the back, is an excellent substitute for an overcoat. Now is the time to subscribe.

The principal reason why those thin wafers you get at the church fair are called oyster fritters, is because you fritter away so much time looking for the oyster.

The opinion now held by physicians that "raw cow's milk is better for children than boiled," is very gratifying, as a raw cow gives much more milk than a boiled one.

The United States half dime of 1802 is worth twenty-three dollars. Why can't we have such coins now-a-days? Horse-car fare would be worth saving under such circumstances.

A writer says "the ears should be so placed as not to be higher than the eyebrow or lower than the tip of the nose." People who are dressing for a party should not forget this.

About 4,000 Russians came to this country last year. This is not a large number, but if their names were tied together the unpronounceable appellations would reach round the earth.

Passenger—"Captain, how far are we from land?" Captain—"About two miles." Passenger—"But I can't see it: in what direction is it?" Captain—"Straight down, sir."

"Johnny, is your sister in?" "I don't know. Lemme see—what's your name?" "Crane—Harry Crane." "All right, Crane—you just sit down, and I'll ask sis if she's at home, but I don't think that's the name."

In Canterbury, the other day, a curious brass box was dug up. Its name and purpose was a mystery until, being opened, there was found inside three buttons, a piece of tin, and a scrap of paper. Then they knew that it was an ancient contribution box.

It is Settled

By the testimony of thirty years experience and of thousands of reliable, conscientious people, that Humphreys' Homeopathic Specifics are unrivaled as household remedies. The tens of thousands of families who habitually use and rely upon them, have less of sickness, better general health, live longer, and pay less for it, than any other class in the land. They are not poisoned, their systems are not drugged, or depleted, or undermined, with medicines, their little ailments are soon cured, and graver ones prevented: and every dose is a builder-up of constitutional vigor and stamina. No wonder the families who have been raised upon them cling with such tenacity to them. The diseases incident to children and location, Mumps, Measles, Scarlet Fever, and Whooping Cough, Malaria, or Rheumatism, pass off as harmless visitations, or are summarily suppressed, while severer diseases find slight lodgment in organisms so well fortified.

Thousands of Farmers, Breeders, Stable-men, Express, Manufacturing and Mining Companies confess that his Veterinary Specifics have emancipated them from the druggery of sick stock, as well as having saved them thousands of dollars.

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Be Warned

in time. Kidney diseases may be prevented by purifying, renewing, and invigorating the blood with Ayer's Sarsaparilla. When, through debility, the action of the kidneys is perverted, these organs rob the blood of its needed constituent, albumen, which is passed off in the urine, while worn out matter, which they should carry off from the blood, is allowed to remain. By the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, the kidneys are restored to proper action, and Albuminuria, or

Bright's Disease

is prevented. Ayer's Sarsaparilla also prevents inflammation of the kidneys, and other disorders of these organs. Mrs. Jas. W. Weld, Forest Hill st., Jamaica Plain, Mass., writes: "I have had a complication of diseases, but my greatest trouble has been with my kidneys. Four bottles of Ayer's Sarsaparilla made me feel like a new person; as well and strong as ever." W. M. McDonald, 46 Summer st., Boston, Mass., had been troubled for years with Kidney Complaint. By the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, he not only

Prevented

the disease from assuming a fatal form, but was restored to perfect health. John McLellan, cor. Bridge and Third sts., Lowell, Mass., writes: "For several years I suffered from Dyspepsia and Kidney Complaint, the latter being so severe at times that I could scarcely attend to my work. My appetite was poor, and I was much emaciated; but by using

AYER'S
Sarsaparilla

my appetite and digestion improved, and my health has been perfectly restored."

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Specific No. 28

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Nervous Debility, Vital Weakness,
and Prostration, from over-work or other causes. $1 per vial, or 5 vials and large vial powder, for $5. Sold by Druggists, or sent postpaid on receipt of price. Address, **Humphreys' Homeopathic Medicine Co., 109 Fulton St., New York.**

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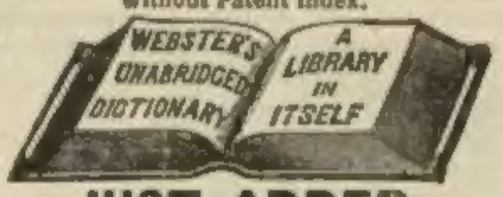

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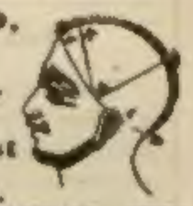

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A Prize Send six cents for postage, and receive free, a costly box of goods which will help all, of either sex, to more money right away than anything else in this world. Fortunes await the workers absolutely sure. Terms mailed free. True & Co. Augusta Me

TO WEAK MEN suffering from nervous debility, weakness of body and mind, loss of memory, mental and physical exhaustion,—I will send you a valuable treatise upon the above diseases, also directions for home cure, free of charge. Address Prof. F. C. FOWLER, Moodus, Conn.

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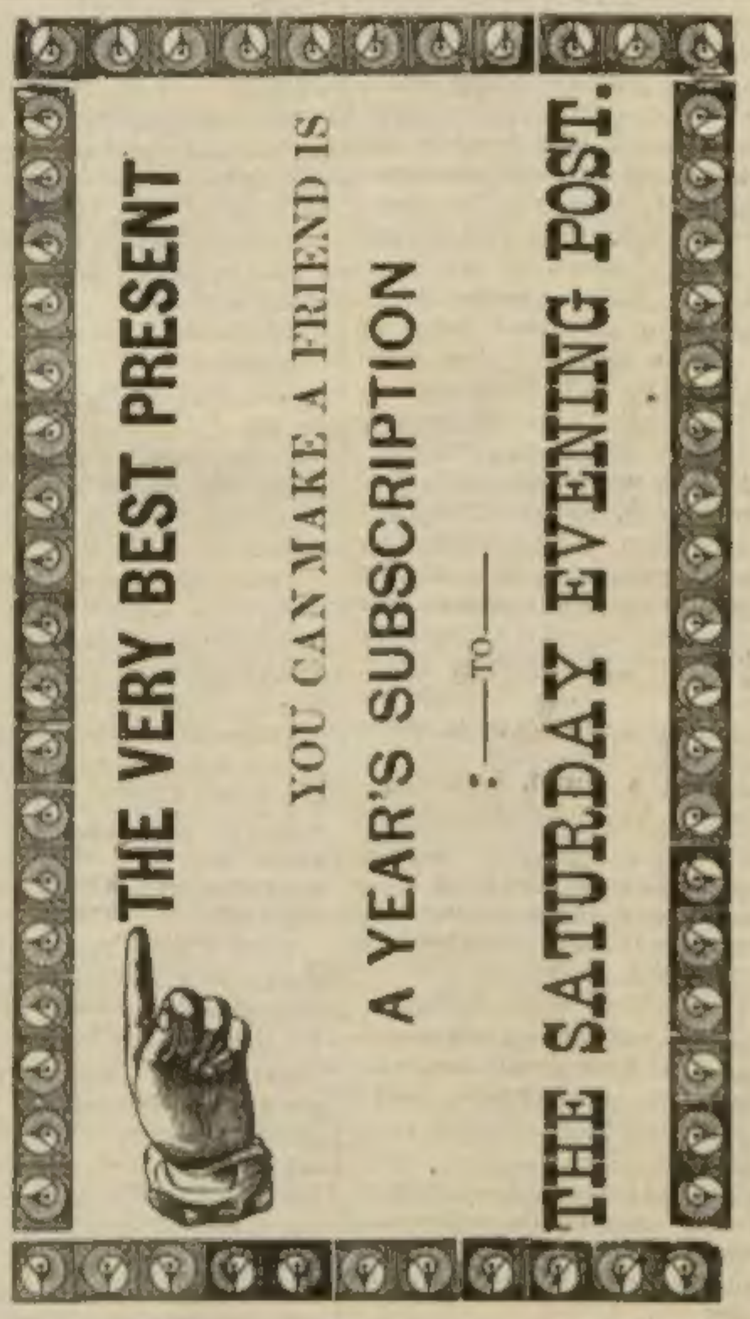

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HOME SWEET HOME
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Latest Fashion Phases.

Before this we have had occasion to sing a psean of praise to yellow. So beautiful a color should not be set aside among the obsolete things, as this was for years. We grant that neither should it be abused. It is a royal tint, not shaping itself to all uses and occasions.

Contrary to the general idea, it adapts itself frequently to blondes as well as brunettes, and that because of the axiom well-known to all painters, that whoso reproduces in her dress, or some part of it, the prevailing tint of eyes or hair cannot fail to secure a becoming effect.

"Match your eyes above all things," they will tell you. Hence a woman with auburn-brown eyes is often superb in orange; one with pale blue orbs, delightful in vague tints of moonlight and azure; one of eyes of the deepest sea-blue, that often goes with black hair, at her best in strong mazarine or peacock blues that on another would seem hard and unlovely, without the reason for the contrary effect in the different cases being perceptible to the observation of the unversed in artistic matters.

Who has ever seen a blonde with eyes of the velvety dark brown of a stag's throat look better than in seal plush or velvet? A girl with the rose and white tinted skin of a Dresden china shepherdess is never so charming as in pink, though the uninitiated may simply note the fact without perceiving its explanation.

In this case it is the prevailing pink of the complexion that is matched. When a dark Southern-looking woman, with a skin of the warm yellow-white of old ivory, makes such a deliciously harmonious impression upon us robed in cream-white satin or cashmere (and she is the type of a woman, by the way, to whom cream-color should be specially and exclusively consecrated) we do not always know that the cause and reason of this impression is that the tone of her skin had been matched also. Again to refer to the pink and white beauties, they are often exquisite in pale greens, and we do not see, what is patent to the artist, that in the white of such complexions there is an underlying greenish tinge that is like the green in the transparent whiteness of mother of pearl.

Thus, when we are bidden pause before a bonnet consisting of a wicker work of large jet beads over a yellow lining, with hoops of yellow and black in front, dashed with jet and broad yellow satin strings, one exclaims:

"How loud! How unbecoming!"

Not so by any means, say we, if the bonnet happens to be worn by a brunette, who has in the clear sallowness a tint of that same yellow, and in the blackness of her eyes again that dash of yellow pigment that belongs to all the blackest black eyes in nature.

An imported evening bonnet of the most flesh-tinted of salmon pinks, with a shower of milky oblong slender beads, like feathery ripe oats, falling over the brim, and a cocarde of salmon pink in narrow loops of ottoman, one would like to see worn by a woman having the delicate clear pinky tinted skin that calls to mind the blossoms of azaleas or oleanders.

A round hat of cardinal jersey cloth, narrowing to a roof-top and slashed and folded down the centre like a man's soft hat, with black astrakhan on border and brim and a cardinal bird in front, one would have donned by—whom?

Any little girl who had a deal of dash of her own, and wore one of the charming walking jackets in black cloth, with astrakhan trimmings and military drooping fourragères!

With respect to astrakhan, the winter's muffs are smaller, rounder than ever. They are a great deal in silver fox, also in lynx, in Alaska sable, in beaver of the natural color.

The latter fur is the young girls' fur, par excellence.

Not much more room in the new muffs but for two small hands and a tiny purse or handkerchief.

The flat bag shape reappears, but remains among the fantasies, and never is lifted to a place of a prevailing style. Something quite novel and startling in the muff line proves itself to be a bag of black velvet, lined with satin and adorned upon the outside with a large sized head of Reynard, pointed ears and all, looking as though he had just climbed up on the other side of the muff, passed his head over the top of it and let it hang there.

His glassy fox eyes stare out at one in a most realistic manner. One asks one's self in doubt whether this stops on the other side of the dangerously "outre" or else just steps beyond the imperceptible yet most rigid line.

Among the exhibits of a large dry goods establishment is a dinner dress (short) of the palest of pearl gray corded silk. Upon the right side climbs a pyramid-shaped panel of pink satin in the lightest conceivable tint of that color, and this is all very finely knife-plaited.

Revers of embroidery in milky beads are applique on the side of the panel. The overdress on the left side is extremely long and cut bias along the bottom, that when taken up on the hip in full folds that melt into the thick back drapery it shall be always of the same length from the edge of the underskirt.

From the waistband it is shirred for several inches before the heavy plaits are laid.

The bodice is so short as to be a mere apology for a basque. It is finished along the edge by something new, namely, a large cord as thick round as one's finger. A plastron of the pale rose-colored satin, again infinitesimally plaited, adorns the front, and overlaying the satin are great leaves of the milky bead passementeries that form a thick scroll work, through the interstices of which the pink simply shows in faint and elusive suggestions.

There is white bead passementerie and a shell of delicate lace upon the sleeves. The entire toilette is conceived in the low tones that would make it most appropriate for a woman with a Quakerish type of beauty. It is, in idea and execution, refinement itself.

Of every day wool walking dresses, three have been especially noticed during the week, one of brown rough-surfaced serge, boucle, with squares of a shade of plum, decidedly bordering on purple; overskirt laid in rich folds, slightly diagonal from the left side in front; basque double breasted, with narrow revers of the purplish velvet, same velvet forming narrow border on all edges.

A second of beige serge, with horizontal stripes of purple velvet, some two inches in width.

In this connection it is to be noted that purple and violet are expressly stated to be among the colors of the future. The striped skirt has a long, slanting apron drapery open to the hip on the left side, with three bars of velvet on the edge that give the effect of a revers.

The bodice has the straight, loose fronts of a jacket, with revers of purple velvet, against which large buttons of fancy metal are set.

Underneath is a gathered plastron of the plain serge that stops at the waist under a little belt of velvet, slightly pointed up and down.

The third costume is of dark garnet hairy wool, with a very deep border of black boucle on the bottom of the skirt, and again on the overdress that is rounded up on the left.

There is a finely plaited vest of the garnet wool and on both sides of it is a square, with a border of black boucle, slopes off with a little fringe of black drops upon the edge. The back of the bodice is most abbreviated, consisting simply of two stunted little tabs.

Each of these three suits is typical of distinct styles, all among the prevailing fashions without counting the backneyed ones. Umbrellas have become something more than mere objects of utility since it has grown to be thought "so English, you know," and hence so extremely the right thing, by a certain class of fashionable young women, to carry an umbrella in and out of season, rain or shine, much as a man would his cane.

Coquetry and super-refinement of fastidiousness creeps in here as well as in all other departments.

The handle is quite often of solid silver, hammered or otherwise ornamented. Something new is the straight opera handle in the Japanese design, of which the best stores show some specially nice exemplars.

The metal is oxidized, with delicate tracery in silver or gold in relief—frogs, lotus leaves, or other Oriental conventionalized patterns.

The umbrellas of dark changeable silk, announced a year ago, have appeared, but not "taken."

Domestic Economy.

INDISPENSABLE.

Time was when all grates were decorated from the itinerant vendors of the article—those gaudy festoons of paper and marvellous contrivances—in wood, tinsel, and shavings of various and elaborate designs. In the present day, few specimens of these so-called ornaments are to be found; a better taste prevails.

Yet the fireplaces remain, and the demand for decoration in our homes is more widespread than ever.

What are the best substitutes for the time-honored white willow shavings with their sprinkling of gold, and the other varieties of a bygone decorative period? They had their advantages, for it should be that the fire be always to be laid in the fireplace, no matter how hot the weather. Everybody knows that it is as frequently cold in July as in December, and there are few weeks in the year that some hours are not rendered more agreeable and wholesome by "a little bit of fire."

But, although the bars are occupied by fuel, it need not become an eyesore; a sheet of white paper placed in the grate before putting in the wood and coals is very little trouble, obviates the bare look, and is no obstacle to lighting the fire at any moment; still, it is rather unsightly, and needs some contrivance in the shape of an ornament to hide it, but which can be readily removed, and in this respect it was that certain of the apron-like designs of yore had their merits.

The shavings, however, on the other hand, usually filled the whole grate, and involved no end of trouble and litter if a fire was unexpectedly called for in mid-summer.

Hence, from all sides, the present generation may be congratulated on the disappearance of the old-fashioned "ornaments for your fireplaces."

Having decided that the grate itself is not to be emptied, there is still one more point to remember, the register in the chimney must remain open.

A closed chimney is a sin against all laws of hygiene.

It is, therefore, a good precaution to have the flues swept in the late spring instead of waiting for the annual fittings, albeit the period may be less convenient.

A not unusual plan of having curtains at the side of the fireplace, which draw in front, removes any difficulty in disposing of the fireplace in summer; but these curtains are not suitable for all rooms, though, with the opportunity they give for decoration, either with the needle or the brush, they are great additions to any room. They are, nevertheless, dust traps, and therefore objectionable.

If, however, they be adopted for one or two apartments some variety is needed for the others.

Let us glance at a few of these. There is one old fashion not without beauty, and, under certain conditions and with the exercise of good taste, it may still be retained—a large jar or jug filled with branches of all sorts of large common flowers and trees.

But it is a country decoration, which requires constant renewal, as the updraught, so essential to the health and comfort of the inhabitants of the room, does not agree with the flowers, and some ingenuity is required to hide the vessel containing the water to nourish them, unless of course the vessel in itself is decorative.

Still, where a constant supply of flowers, flowering shrubs, or long picturesque grasses is readily to be obtained there is no prettier ornament for the fireplace than a judicious arrangement of fresh herbage. A great aid to this is a sort of cane fabric fixed into a tin box which takes the place of the fender.

This box is filled with plants in pots, flowers alternating with creepers, the latter being trained lightly over the background of cane.

The flowers, of course, will fade the more quickly, but can readily be renewed. The front of the tin box may be hidden by basket work, or by tiles, which, if possible, should harmonize with any others that have been used in the construction or lining of the grate.

Another way of employing tiles is to have a sort of fender of them to place in front of the pots, which in this case, of course, stands on the hearth, and will hide the coals, without any other background. The advantage of this substitute for the fender is that it can be placed farther or nearer to the pots, in accordance with their size, instead of being a fixture, as in the case of the tin box.

Where flowers are not to be readily procured, pictures make the best screens. They should, of course, fit the space as nearly as possible, and, if really fitting it upon the so-called fireboard principle, the frames should be perforated and a space left open at the bottom for the sake of ventilation.

A cane framework may be contrived, which will meet these requirements.

For bedrooms, a grate screen may be constructed, again on the fireboard principle, by stretching a piece of muslin on a frame and by pasting on its centre any well-chosen common colored engravings, Christmas cards, &c.

The muslin allows ample ventilation, and is easily fixed and as easily removed. It may also be hand-painted by anyone clever with their brush, and a score of pretty devices suggest themselves.

In country houses a quantity of fir cones strewn or strayed over the coals is very pretty, and will aid in the kindling of a bright, not too hot, fire, is one is needed.

Fir cones, indeed, may be utilized as ornaments for the stoves in many different ways, where an ample supply of them is at hand, whilst their scent, on being ignited, is exceedingly agreeable as well as healthful.

"Look yhar," said a negro porter of a palace car to a Montana rustler; "hadn't you better take your boots off in bed?" "Oh, it's no matter!" replied the rustler. "They're not my best boots."

MODERN society overlooks a solid reputation much more readily than it does soiled gloves.

Confidential Correspondents.

BERT.—A marriage license is good any time after its issue.

G. N. B.—The system is of the very best, and is managed by principals of the highest respectability. Should you write, mention this endorsement by THE POST.

E.—You can use as many as you like when you give recitations. But this would be regarded by most people as a ridiculous piece of affectation, unless it were rendered desirable by special reasons.

MANHATTAN.—It would be a great breach of propriety and etiquette, to say nothing of want of filial feeling and affection, to go out to dances six months after so awful and heart-breaking a bereavement as the death of a mother.

DOLON.—Yes; your best plan would be to become acquainted with a man of experience in the profession, who would be able to ascertain your abilities, give you a certain amount of necessary tuition, and put you on the right track.

L. A. C.—The Samian letter is the letter Y. It was used by Pythagoras, the philosopher as an emblem of the straight, narrow path of virtue, which is one, but if once deviated from, the further the lines are extended the wider becomes the breach.

ELLEN.—If you are as good-looking as you represent yourself to be accomplished, we should think that you will not have long to wait before you receive the addresses of a suitor. But a modest and well-behaved young lady cannot make any overtures to a person of the opposite sex.

DORA L.—It is not proper, because a girl should never make herself too cheap. Such friendliness should only be where an engagement exists. Mikado—is pronounced with the accent on the second syllable, the "a" of which is sounded as in father. The "i" in the first syllable is sounded as in "hit."

FRANK.—You must read, study, and meditate upon what you read and study, until you have opinions of your own on subjects of general interest, and then you will be able to take part in the conversations at social gatherings and in private circles. No man can talk unless he has ideas and opinions.

G. F.—1. There is no rule. It is known to the style most suited for the face. She and her friends should settle this much better than any other authority. 2. It is not the correct thing to accept jewelry of any kind from mere friends. If the parties are engaged or likely to become so, such a present is most appropriate.

MARY C.—Why your face gets red when hot, or walking, we do not know. Indigestion may be the cause, though it is an annoyance most people suffer from who are of a fair or florid complexion. Dark-skinned people have one advantage: they are not so subject to external influences. We would advise you not to walk too quickly, and never immediately after a meal.

E. L.—During the war which brought Charles I. of England to the scaffold, the adherents of that monarch were first called Cavaliers and the friends of the Parliament were called Roundheads. This latter term arose from those persons who thus distinguished themselves putting a round bowl, or wooden dish, upon their heads, and cutting their hair by the edges or brim of the bowl.

QUESTION.—We think that if such traits are discovered after the engagement, it is best to break it, rather than run the risk of life-long misery. One should be certain, however, that the qualities objected to, are in the character and not trivial habits that the marriage relation may eradicate or suppress. It is very grave to break formally with an engagement of this kind, and any violation thereof may produce grave consequences.

C. O. L.—Your own excessive timidity causes the girl's confusion. A young man of eighteen should feel that it is his part to put a lady at her ease, and endeavor to overcome a reserve that must be painful to both parties. Of the two, excessive timidity is more embarrassing to a female, than an easy forwardness which might be almost interpreted into presumption. The latter she can keep within proper limits, but the former entirely overcomes her.

GOVERNESS.—Certainly not. Your promise was given upon conditions self-imposed by the other party; and if these were violated, then you are surely free from all obligations. Never trust your written thoughts in the hands of one who can betray the confidence of a friend, unless they may be such as you wish all his associates to see. And yet we are of opinion that a young lady should hesitate to write at all that which must be "kept a secret from her friends."

J. L. S.—Your only hope is to see a physician. There is not the least danger of his divulging the fact to your parents. They hold the confidences of patients inviolable unless there is good reason for the contrary course. In your case there is none. You are merely unfortunate and lacking in will-power as have been thousands of lads and young men before you. Avoid being alone, and try to keep your mind from dwelling on the subject of your infirmity. But by all means see a doctor.

K. Z.—It is supposed they talk of events happening in the neighborhood. The weather might serve as an opening, and from this the conversation might take its natural course. No strict rule can be given. It is understood, however, that on slight acquaintance there is to be neither any particular liberty of speech or manner. 2. If you favor him, tell him it will be a great pleasure to you to have him call. 3. No privileges whatever. Take this in its fullest meaning—none whatever. Long acquaintance, with an actual or implied engagement alone justify the innocent and legitimate endearments of lovers. 4. It is usual to accompany a visitor to the door under such circumstances.

SUN.—There has been great difference of opinion on the point you mention, but scientists are now pretty generally agreed that the sun shining on a fire has no real effect upon it, though our own eyesight would convince us to the contrary, as it certainly appears to "kill" the fire. The old notion was that the rays of the sun absorbed the oxygen from the air which is so essential to the life of the fire, and thus stopped the "draught" from fanning the flame and giving it fresh vigor, as the oxygen affects lighted coal-gas in such a way that the hydrogen mingles with it, and leaves the carbon in a state of incandescence; the latter, in its turns, mingles with oxygen, and passes off in the form of carbonic acid.